



**STATE OF TENNESSEE
TENNESSEE HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION**

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
FOR
TEXT MESSAGING PLATFORM**

RFP 33201-09416

RELEASE 1

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1. INTRODUCTION

The State of Tennessee, Tennessee Higher Education Commission, hereinafter referred to as "THEC" or "State," has issued this Request for Proposals (RFP) to define minimum contract requirements; solicit responses; detail response requirements; and, outline the State's process for evaluating responses and selecting a contractor to provide the needed goods or services.

Through this RFP, the State seeks to procure necessary goods or services at the most favorable, competitive prices and to give ALL qualified businesses, including those that are owned by minorities, women, Tennessee service-disabled veterans, and small business enterprises, an opportunity to do business with the state as contractors, subcontractors or suppliers.

Statement of Procurement Purpose

THEC seeks a mass text messaging platform for Tennessee's federally-funded GEAR UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs) grant and the state-funded Governor's College Advisor Corps. Both programs aim to increase college enrollment and persistence. GEAR UP TN is a program designed to increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. GEAR UP TN provides college access and success focused services to a cohort of approximately 7,500 students, the class of 2018, beginning in the seventh grade and continuing through the cohort's first year of postsecondary education. GEAR UP TN will also provide financial aid and college access services to approximately 5,000 direct-service high school senior students each year. The Governor's Advisor Corps, aligned with Tennessee's Drive to 55 initiatives, aims to increase the number of Tennessee students who enter and complete postsecondary education by equipping high-need schools with a full-time college advisor. Advisors will help students navigate the postsecondary enrollment process and partner with Tennessee high schools to create a statewide culture of college-going and postsecondary attainment.

The text messaging solution will allow GEAR UP TN staff to create a text message program whereby unlimited scheduled text messages are sent to approximately 34,000 students in year one, 27,000 students in year two, and 34,000 students in year three of the contract. Of those students, approximately 20,000 students will be part of the Governor's Advisor Corps each year, with the remainder participating in GEAR UP TN. The number of participating students in year two is reduced due to the structure of the GEAR UP TN program. As previously mentioned, GEAR UP TN serves the class of 2018 cohort and seniors each year. During Year 2, the class of 2018 cohort will be in their senior year of high school so no additional grade levels will be served. The following year, the Class of 2018 cohort will be freshmen in college and GEAR UP TN will again serve an additional population of high school seniors. Messages may be customized based on stored student-level data and students may reply and receive a response from system users.

1.1.2. THEC has not previously contracted for text messaging services; and therefore, does not have the historical information necessary to provide an estimated maximum liability pursuant to T.C.A. § 12-3-305, requiring state agencies to include information regarding the total estimated purchase for the current contract period, and for the contract period of the contract awarded pursuant to this RFP. However, THEC is allocating up to \$190,000 per year for this initiative.

1.2. Scope of Service, Contract Period, & Required Terms and Conditions

The RFP Attachment 6.6., *Pro Forma* Contract details the State's requirements:

- Scope of Services and Deliverables (Section A);
- Contract Period (Section B);

- Payment Terms (Section C);
- Standard Terms and Conditions (Section D); and,
- Special Terms and Conditions (Section E).

The *pro forma* contract substantially represents the contract document that the successful Respondent must sign.

1.3. **Nondiscrimination**

No person shall be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination in the performance of a Contract pursuant to this RFP or in the employment practices of the Contractor on the grounds of handicap or disability, age, race, creed, color, religion, sex, national origin, or any other classification protected by federal, Tennessee state constitutional, or statutory law. The Contractor pursuant to this RFP shall, upon request, show proof of such nondiscrimination and shall post in conspicuous places, available to all employees and applicants, notices of nondiscrimination.

1.4. **RFP Communications**

- 1.4.1. The State has assigned the following RFP identification number that must be referenced in all communications regarding this RFP:

RFP 33201-09416

- 1.4.2. **Unauthorized contact about this RFP with employees or officials of the State of Tennessee except as detailed below may result in disqualification from consideration under this procurement process.**

- 1.4.2.1. Prospective Respondents must direct communications concerning this RFP to the following person designated as the Solicitation Coordinator:

Marcie Mills
 Contracts Administration Manager
 Tennessee Higher Education Commission
 Suite 1900, Parkway Towers
 404 James Robertson Parkway
 Nashville, TN 37243
Marcie.Mills@TN.gov
 Telephone: 615.532.3500
 Fax: 615.741.5555

- 1.4.2.2. Notwithstanding the foregoing, Prospective Respondents may alternatively contact:

- a. staff of the Governor's Office of Diversity Business Enterprise for assistance available to minority-owned, woman-owned, Tennessee service-disabled veteran owned, and small businesses as well as general, public information relating to this RFP (visit <http://www.tn.gov/general/services/article/godbe-general-contacts> for contact information); and
- b. the following individual designated by the State to coordinate compliance with the nondiscrimination requirements of the State of Tennessee, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and associated federal regulations:

Scott Sloan
Associate Executive Director, Legal and Regulatory Affairs
Tennessee Higher Education Commission
Suite 1900, Parkway Towers
404 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, TN 37243
Scott.Sloan@tn.gov
Telephone: 615.741.3605
Fax: 615.741.6230

- 1.4.3. Only the State's official, written responses and communications with Respondents are binding with regard to this RFP. Oral communications between a State official and one or more Respondents are unofficial and non-binding.
- 1.4.4. Potential Respondents must ensure that the State receives all written questions and comments, including questions and requests for clarification, no later than the Written Questions & Comments Deadline detailed in the RFP Section 2, Schedule of Events.
- 1.4.5. Respondents must assume the risk of the method of dispatching any communication or response to the State. The State assumes no responsibility for delays or delivery failures resulting from the Respondent's method of dispatch. Actual or digital "postmarking" of a communication or response to the State by a specified deadline is not a substitute for the State's actual receipt of a communication or response.
- 1.4.6. The State will convey all official responses and communications related to this RFP to the prospective Respondents from whom the State has received a Notice of Intent to Respond (refer to RFP Section 1.8.).
- 1.4.7. The State reserves the right to determine, at its sole discretion, the method of conveying official, written responses and communications related to this RFP. Such written communications may be transmitted by mail, hand-delivery, facsimile, electronic mail, Internet posting, or any other means deemed reasonable by the State. For internet posting, please refer to the following website:
http://tn.gov/generalservices/article/request-for-proposals-rfp-opportunities_
- 1.4.8. The State reserves the right to determine, at its sole discretion, the appropriateness and adequacy of responses to written comments, questions, and requests related to this RFP. The State's official, written responses will constitute an amendment of this RFP.
- 1.4.9. Any data or factual information provided by the State (in this RFP, an RFP amendment or any other communication relating to this RFP) is for informational purposes only. The State will make reasonable efforts to ensure the accuracy of such data or information, however it is the Respondent's obligation to independently verify any data or information provided by the State. The State expressly disclaims the accuracy or adequacy of any information or data that it provides to prospective Respondents.

1.5. Assistance to Respondents with a Handicap or Disability

Prospective Respondents with a handicap or disability may receive accommodation relating to the communication of this RFP and participating in the RFP process. Prospective Respondents may contact the Solicitation Coordinator to request such reasonable accommodation no later than the Disability Accommodation Request Deadline detailed in the RFP Section 2, Schedule of Events.

1.6. **Respondent Required Review & Waiver of Objections**

- 1.6.1. Each prospective Respondent must carefully review this RFP, including but not limited to, attachments, the RFP Attachment 6.6., *Pro Forma* Contract, and any amendments, for questions, comments, defects, objections, or any other matter requiring clarification or correction (collectively called "questions and comments").
- 1.6.2. Any prospective Respondent having questions and comments concerning this RFP must provide them in writing to the State no later than the Written Questions & Comments Deadline detailed in the RFP Section 2, Schedule of Events.
- 1.6.3. Protests based on any objection to the RFP shall be considered waived and invalid if the objection has not been brought to the attention of the State, in writing, by the Written Questions & Comments Deadline.

1.7. **Pre-Response Conference Call**

A Pre-Response Conference Call will be held at the time and date detailed in the RFP Section 2, Schedule of Events. Attendance on the call is not mandatory.

The purpose of the conference call is to discuss the RFP scope of goods or services. The State will entertain questions, however prospective Respondents must understand that the State's oral response to any question at the Pre-response Conference shall be unofficial and non-binding. Prospective Respondents must submit all questions, comments, or other concerns regarding the RFP in writing prior to the Written Questions & Comments Deadline date detailed in the RFP Section 2, Schedule of Events. The State will send the official response to these questions and comments to prospective Respondents from whom the State has received a Notice of Intent to respond as indicated in RFP Section 1.8. and on the date detailed in the RFP Section 2, Schedule of Events.

To attend the call:

- 1) The Toll-Free Dial-In Number is 1.888.757.2790
- 2) A voice prompt will request you to enter the Passcode **133380**, followed by the # sign.
- 3) A voice prompt will ask you to hold while your passcode is being accepted.
- 4) The following keypad commands may be used:
 - Press *1 to hear a help menu.
 - Press *0 to reach an operator.
 - Press *6 to mute or "un-mute" line.
 - Press *4 to increase conference volume.
 - Press *7 to decrease conference volume.
 - Press *5 to increase your voice volume.
 - Press *8 to decrease your voice volume.

** Please remember that if you have background music when your line is placed on "hold," please lay the phone down or disconnect from the conference if you must answer another call or other interruption.

1.8. **Notice of Intent to Respond**

Before the Notice of Intent to Respond Deadline detailed in the RFP Section 2, Schedule of Events, prospective Respondents should submit to the Solicitation Coordinator a Notice of Intent to Respond (in the form of a simple e-mail or other written communication). Such notice should include the following information:

- the business or individual's name (as appropriate)
- a contact person's name and title
- the contact person's mailing address, telephone number, facsimile number, and e-mail address

A Notice of Intent to Respond creates no obligation and is not a prerequisite for submitting a response; however, it is necessary to ensure receipt of any RFP amendments or other notices and communications relating to this RFP.

1.9. Response Deadline

A Respondent must ensure that the State receives a response no later than the response Deadline time and date detailed in the RFP Section 2, Schedule of Events. A response must respond, as required, to this RFP (including its attachments) as may be amended. The State will not accept late responses, and a Respondent's failure to submit a response before the deadline will result in disqualification of the response. It is the responsibility of the Respondent to ascertain any additional security requirements with respect to packaging and delivery to the State of Tennessee. Respondents should be mindful of any potential delays due to security screening procedures, weather, or other filing delays whether foreseeable or unforeseeable.

2. RFP SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

2.1. The following RFP Schedule of Events represents the State's best estimate for this RFP.

| EVENT | TIME (Central Time Zone) | DATE |
|---|--------------------------------|----------------|
| 1. RFP Issued | | April 4, 2016 |
| 2. Disability Accommodation Request Deadline | 2:00 p.m. | April 7, 2016 |
| 3. Pre-Response Conference Call | 2:00 p.m. | April 8, 2016 |
| 4. Notice of Intent to Respond Deadline | 2:00 p.m. | April 13, 2016 |
| 5. Written "Questions & Comments" Deadline | 2:00 p.m. | April 18, 2016 |
| 6. State Response to Written "Questions & Comments" | | April 29, 2016 |
| 7. Response Deadline | 2:00 p.m. | May 6, 2016 |
| 8. State Completion of Technical Response Evaluations | | May 24, 2016 |
| 9. State Opening & Scoring of Cost Proposals | 2:00 p.m. | May 25, 2016 |
| 10. State Notice of Intent to Award Released <u>and</u> RFP Files Opened for Public Inspection | 2:00 p.m. | May 30, 2016 |
| 11. End of Open File Period | | June 7, 2016 |
| 12. State sends contract to Contractor for signature | | June 8, 2016 |
| 13. Contractor Signature Deadline | 2:00 p.m. | June 15, 2016 |

2.2. **The State reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to adjust the RFP Schedule of Events as it deems necessary.** Any adjustment of the Schedule of Events shall constitute an RFP amendment, and the State will communicate such to prospective Respondents from whom the State has received a Notice of Intent to Respond (refer to section 1.8.).

3. RESPONSE REQUIREMENTS

3.1. Response Form

A response to this RFP must consist of two parts, a Technical Response and a Cost Proposal.

- 3.1.1. **Technical Response.** RFP Attachment 6.2., Technical Response & Evaluation Guide provides the specific requirements for submitting a response. This guide includes mandatory requirement items, general qualifications and experience items, and technical qualifications, experience, and approach items all of which must be addressed with a written response and, in some instances, additional documentation.

NOTICE: A technical response must not include any pricing or cost information. If any pricing or cost information amounts of any type (even pricing relating to other projects) is included in any part of the technical response, the state may deem the response to be non-responsive and reject it.

- 3.1.1.1. A Respondent must use the RFP Attachment 6.2., Technical Response & Evaluation Guide to organize, reference, and draft the Technical Response by duplicating the attachment, adding appropriate page numbers as required, and using the guide as a table of contents covering the Technical Response.
- 3.1.1.2. A response should be economically prepared, with emphasis on completeness and clarity. A response, as well as any reference material presented, must be written in English and must be written on standard 8 ½" x 11" pages (although oversize exhibits are permissible) and use a 12 point font for text. All response pages must be numbered.
- 3.1.1.3. All information and documentation included in a Technical Response should respond to or address a specific requirement detailed in the RFP Attachment 6.2., Technical Response & Evaluation Guide. All information must be incorporated into a response to a specific requirement and clearly referenced. Any information not meeting these criteria will be deemed extraneous and will not contribute to evaluations.
- 3.1.1.4. The State may determine a response to be non-responsive and reject it if:
- a. the Respondent fails to organize and properly reference the Technical Response as required by this RFP and the RFP Attachment 6.2., Technical Response & Evaluation Guide; or
 - b. the Technical Response document does not appropriately respond to, address, or meet all of the requirements and response items detailed in the RFP Attachment 6.2., Technical Response & Evaluation Guide.
- 3.1.2. **Cost Proposal.** A Cost Proposal must be recorded on an exact duplicate of the RFP Attachment 6.3., Cost Proposal & Scoring Guide.

NOTICE: If a Respondent fails to submit a cost proposal exactly as required, the State may deem the response to be non-responsive and reject it.

- 3.1.2.1. A Respondent must only record the proposed cost exactly as required by the RFP Attachment 6.3., Cost Proposal & Scoring Guide and must NOT record any other rates, amounts, or information.
- 3.1.2.2. The proposed cost shall incorporate ALL costs for services under the contract for the total contract period, including any renewals or extensions.
- 3.1.2.3. A Respondent must sign and date the Cost Proposal.
- 3.1.2.4. A Respondent must submit the Cost Proposal to the State in a sealed package separate from the Technical Response (as detailed in RFP Sections 3.2.3., *et seq.*).

3.2. Response Delivery

- 3.2.1. A Respondent must ensure that both the original Technical Response and Cost Proposal documents meet all form and content requirements, including all required signatures, as detailed within this RFP.
- 3.2.2. A Respondent must submit original Technical Response and Cost Proposal documents and copies as specified below.

- 3.2.2.1. One (1) original Technical Response paper document in a 3-ring binder labeled:

“RFP 33201-09416 TECHNICAL RESPONSE ORIGINAL”

and Seven (7) paper copies of the Technical Response in 3-ring binders labeled:

“RFP 33201-09416 TECHNICAL RESPONSE COPY”

and Eight (8) digital copies of the Technical Response each in the form of one (1) digital document in “PDF” format properly recorded on its own otherwise blank, standard CD-R recordable disc or USB flash drive labeled:

“RFP 33201-09416 TECHNICAL RESPONSE COPY”

The digital copies should not include copies of sealed customer references, however any other discrepancy between the paper Technical Response document and any digital copies may result in the State rejecting the proposal as non-responsive.

- 3.2.2.2. One (1) original Cost Proposal paper document labeled:

“RFP 33201-09416 COST PROPOSAL ORIGINAL”

and one (1) copy in the form of a digital document in “PDF” or “XLS” format properly recorded on separate, blank, standard CD-R recordable disc or USB flash drive labeled:

“RFP 33201-09416 COST PROPOSAL COPY”

In the event of a discrepancy between the original Cost Proposal document and the digital copy, the original, signed document will take precedence.

- 3.2.3. A Respondent must separate, seal, package, and label the documents and copies for delivery as follows:

- 3.2.3.1. The Technical Response original document and digital copies must be placed in a sealed package that is clearly labeled:

“DO NOT OPEN... RFP 33201-09416 TECHNICAL RESPONSE FROM [RESPONDENT LEGAL ENTITY NAME]”

- 3.2.3.2. The Cost Proposal original document and digital copy must be placed in a separate, sealed package that is clearly labeled:

“DO NOT OPEN... RFP 33201-09416 COST PROPOSAL FROM [RESPONDENT LEGAL ENTITY NAME]”

- 3.2.3.3. The separately, sealed Technical Response and Cost Proposal components may be enclosed in a larger package for mailing or delivery, provided that the outermost package is clearly labeled:

“RFP 33201-09416 SEALED TECHNICAL RESPONSE & SEALED COST PROPOSAL FROM [RESPONDENT LEGAL ENTITY NAME]”

- 3.2.4. A Respondent must ensure that the State receives a response no later than the Response Deadline time and date detailed in the RFP Section 2, Schedule of Events at the following address:

Marcie Mills
Contracts Administration Manager
Tennessee Higher Education Commission
Suite 1900, Parkway Towers
404 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, TN 37243
Marcie.Mills@TN.gov
Telephone: 615.532.3500
Fax: 615.741.5555

3.3. Response & Respondent Prohibitions

- 3.3.1. A response must not include alternate contract terms and conditions. If a response contains such terms and conditions, the State, at its sole discretion, may determine the response to be a non-responsive counteroffer and reject it.
- 3.3.2. A response must not restrict the rights of the State or otherwise qualify either the offer to deliver goods or provide services as required by this RFP or the Cost Proposal. If a response restricts the rights of the State or otherwise qualifies either the offer to deliver goods or provide services as required by this RFP or the Cost Proposal, the State, at its sole discretion, may determine the response to be a non-responsive counteroffer and reject it.
- 3.3.3. A response must not propose alternative goods or services (*i.e.*, offer services different from those requested and required by this RFP) unless expressly requested in this RFP.

The State may consider a response of alternative goods or services to be non-responsive and reject it.

- 3.3.4. A Cost Proposal must be prepared and arrived at independently and must not involve any collusion between Respondents. The State will reject any Cost Proposal that involves collusion, consultation, communication, or agreement between Respondents. Regardless of the time of detection, the State will consider any such actions to be grounds for response rejection or contract termination.
- 3.3.5. A Respondent must not provide, for consideration in this RFP process or subsequent contract negotiations, any information that the Respondent knew or should have known was materially incorrect. If the State determines that a Respondent has provided such incorrect information, the State will deem the Response non-responsive and reject it.
- 3.3.6. A Respondent must not submit more than one Technical Response and one Cost Proposal in response to this RFP, except as expressly requested by the State in this RFP. If a Respondent submits more than one Technical Response or more than one Cost Proposal, the State will deem all of the responses non-responsive and reject them.
- 3.3.7. A Respondent must not submit a response as a prime contractor while also permitting one or more other Respondents to offer the Respondent as a subcontractor in their own responses. Such may result in the disqualification of all Respondents knowingly involved. This restriction does not, however, prohibit different Respondents from offering the same subcontractor as a part of their responses (provided that the subcontractor does not also submit a response as a prime contractor).
- 3.3.8. The State shall not consider a response from an individual who is, or within the past six (6) months has been, a State employee. For purposes of this RFP:
 - 3.3.8.1. An individual shall be deemed a State employee until such time as all compensation for salary, termination pay, and annual leave has been paid;
 - 3.3.8.2. A contract with or a response from a company, corporation, or any other contracting entity in which a controlling interest is held by any State employee shall be considered to be a contract with or proposal from the employee; and
 - 3.3.8.3. A contract with or a response from a company, corporation, or any other contracting entity that employs an individual who is, or within the past six (6) months has been, a State employee shall not be considered a contract with or a proposal from the employee and shall not constitute a prohibited conflict of interest.

3.4. **Response Errors & Revisions**

A Respondent is responsible for any and all response errors or omissions. A Respondent will not be allowed to alter or revise response documents after the Response Deadline time and date detailed in the RFP Section 2, Schedule of Events unless such is formally requested, in writing, by the State.

3.5. **Response Withdrawal**

A Respondent may withdraw a submitted response at any time before the Response Deadline time and date detailed in the RFP Section 2, Schedule of Events by submitting a written request

signed by an authorized Respondent representative. After withdrawing a response, a Respondent may submit another response at any time before the Response Deadline. After the Response Deadline, a Respondent may only withdraw all or a portion of a response where the enforcement of the response would impose an unconscionable hardship on the Respondent.

3.6. **Additional Services**

If a response offers goods or services in addition to those required by and described in this RFP, the State, at its sole discretion, may add such services to the contract awarded as a result of this RFP. Notwithstanding the foregoing, a Respondent must not propose any additional cost amounts or rates for additional goods or services. Regardless of any additional services offered in a response, the Respondent's Cost Proposal must only record the proposed cost as required in this RFP and must not record any other rates, amounts, or information.

NOTICE: If a Respondent fails to submit a Cost Proposal exactly as required, the State may deem the response non-responsive and reject it.

3.7. **Response Preparation Costs**

The State will not pay any costs associated with the preparation, submittal, or presentation of any response.

4. GENERAL CONTRACTING INFORMATION & REQUIREMENTS

4.1. RFP Amendment

The State at its sole discretion may amend this RFP, in writing, at any time prior to contract award. However, prior to any such amendment, the State will consider whether it would negatively impact the ability of potential Respondents to meet the response deadline and revise the RFP Schedule of Events if deemed appropriate. If an RFP amendment is issued, the State will convey it to potential Respondents who submitted a Notice of Intent to Respond (refer to RFP Section 1.8.). A response must address the final RFP (including its attachments) as amended.

4.2. RFP Cancellation

The State reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to cancel the RFP or to cancel and reissue this RFP in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

4.3. State Right of Rejection

4.3.1. Subject to applicable laws and regulations, the State reserves the right to reject, at its sole discretion, any and all responses.

4.3.2. The State may deem as non-responsive and reject any response that does not comply with all terms, conditions, and performance requirements of this RFP. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the State reserves the right to waive, at its sole discretion, minor variances from full compliance with this RFP. If the State waives variances in a response, such waiver shall not modify the RFP requirements or excuse the Respondent from full compliance, and the State may hold any resulting Contractor to strict compliance with this RFP.

4.4. Assignment & Subcontracting

4.4.1. The Contractor may not subcontract, transfer, or assign any portion of the Contract awarded as a result of this RFP without prior approval of the State. The State reserves the right to refuse approval, at its sole discretion, of any subcontract, transfer, or assignment.

4.4.2. If a Respondent intends to use subcontractors, the response to this RFP must specifically identify the scope and portions of the work each subcontractor will perform (refer to RFP Attachment 6.2., Section B, General Qualifications & Experience Item B.14.).

4.4.3. Subcontractors identified within a response to this RFP will be deemed as approved by the State unless the State expressly disapproves one or more of the proposed subcontractors prior to signing the Contract.

4.4.4. After contract award, a Contractor may only substitute an approved subcontractor at the discretion of the State and with the State's prior, written approval.

4.4.5. Notwithstanding any State approval relating to subcontracts, the Respondent who is awarded a contract pursuant to this RFP will be the prime contractor and will be responsible for all work under the Contract.

4.5. Right to Refuse Personnel or Subcontractors

The State reserves the right to refuse, at its sole discretion and notwithstanding any prior approval, any personnel of the prime contractor or a subcontractor providing goods or services in

the performance of a contract resulting from this RFP. The State will document in writing the reason(s) for any rejection of personnel.

4.6. Insurance

From time-to-time, the State may require the awarded Contractor to provide a Certificate of Insurance issued by an insurance company licensed or authorized to provide insurance in the State of Tennessee. Each Certificate of Insurance shall indicate current insurance coverages meeting minimum requirements as may be specified by this RFP. A failure to provide a current, Certificate of Insurance will be considered a material breach and grounds for contract termination.

4.7. Professional Licensure and Department of Revenue Registration

4.7.1. All persons, agencies, firms, or other entities that provide legal or financial opinions, which a Respondent provides for consideration and evaluation by the State as a part of a response to this RFP, shall be properly licensed to render such opinions.

4.7.2. Before the Contract resulting from this RFP is signed, the apparent successful Respondent (and Respondent employees and subcontractors, as applicable) must hold all necessary or appropriate business or professional licenses to provide the goods or services as required by the contract. The State may require any Respondent to submit evidence of proper licensure.

4.7.3. Before the Contract resulting from this RFP is signed, the apparent successful Respondent must be registered with the Tennessee Department of Revenue for the collection of Tennessee sales and use tax. The State shall not award a contract unless the Respondent provides proof of such registration or provides documentation from the Department of Revenue that the Contractor is exempt from this registration requirement. The foregoing is a mandatory requirement of an award of a contract pursuant to this solicitation. For purposes of this registration requirement, the Department of Revenue may be contacted at: TN.Revenue@tn.gov.

4.8. Disclosure of Response Contents

4.8.1. All materials submitted to the State in response to this RFP shall become the property of the State of Tennessee. Selection or rejection of a response does not affect this right. By submitting a response, a Respondent acknowledges and accepts that the full response contents and associated documents will become open to public inspection in accordance with the laws of the State of Tennessee.

4.8.2. The State will hold all response information, including both technical and cost information, in confidence during the evaluation process. Notwithstanding the foregoing, a list of actual Respondents submitting timely responses may be available to the public, upon request, after technical responses are opened.

4.8.3. Upon completion of response evaluations, indicated by public release of a Notice of Intent to Award, the responses and associated materials will be open for review by the public in accordance with *Tennessee Code Annotated*, Section 10-7-504(a)(7).

4.9. Contract Approval and Contract Payments

4.9.1. After contract award, the Contractor who is awarded the contract must submit appropriate documentation with the Department of Finance and Administration, Division of Accounts.

- 4.9.2. This RFP and its contractor selection processes do not obligate the State and do not create rights, interests, or claims of entitlement in either the Respondent with the apparent best-evaluated response or any other Respondent. State obligations pursuant to a contract award shall commence only after the contract is signed by the State agency head and the Contractor and after the Contract is approved by all other state officials as required by applicable laws and regulations.
- 4.9.3. No payment will be obligated or made until the relevant Contract is approved as required by applicable statutes and rules of the State of Tennessee.
- 4.9.3.1. The State shall not be liable for payment of any type associated with the Contract resulting from this RFP (or any amendment thereof) or responsible for any goods delivered or services rendered by the Contractor, even goods delivered or services rendered in good faith and even if the Contractor is orally directed to proceed with the delivery of goods or the rendering of services, if it occurs before the Contract start date or after the Contract end date.
- 4.9.3.2. All payments relating to this procurement will be made in accordance with the Payment Terms and Conditions of the Contract resulting from this RFP (refer to RFP Attachment 6.6., *Pro Forma* Contract, Section C).
- 4.9.3.3. If any provision of the Contract provides direct funding or reimbursement for the competitive purchase of goods or services as a component of contract performance or otherwise provides for the reimbursement of specified, actual costs, the State will employ all reasonable means and will require all such documentation that it deems necessary to ensure that such purchases were competitive and costs were reasonable, necessary, and actual. The Contractor shall provide reasonable assistance and access related to such review. Further, the State shall not remit, as funding or reimbursement pursuant to such provisions, any amounts that it determines do not represent reasonable, necessary, and actual costs.

4.10. Contractor Performance

The Contractor who is awarded a contract will be responsible for the delivery of all acceptable goods or the satisfactory completion of all services set out in this RFP (including attachments) as may be amended. All goods or services are subject to inspection and evaluation by the State. The State will employ all reasonable means to ensure that goods delivered or services rendered are in compliance with the Contract, and the Contractor must cooperate with such efforts.

4.11. Contract Amendment

After contract award, the State may request the Contractor to deliver additional goods or perform additional services within the general scope of the contract and this RFP, but beyond the specified scope of service, and for which the Contractor may be compensated. In such instances, the State will provide the Contractor a written description of the additional goods or services. The Contractor must respond to the State with a time schedule for delivering the additional goods or accomplishing the additional services based on the compensable units included in the Contractor's response to this RFP. If the State and the Contractor reach an agreement regarding the goods or services and associated compensation, such agreement must be effected by means of a contract amendment. Further, any such amendment requiring additional goods or services must be signed by both the State agency head and the Contractor and must be approved by other state officials as required by applicable statutes, rules, policies

and procedures of the State of Tennessee. The Contractor must not provide additional goods or render additional services until the State has issued a written contract amendment with all required approvals.

4.12. **Severability**

If any provision of this RFP is declared by a court to be illegal or in conflict with any law, said decision will not affect the validity of the remaining RFP terms and provisions, and the rights and obligations of the State and Respondents will be construed and enforced as if the RFP did not contain the particular provision held to be invalid.

4.13. **Next Ranked Respondent**

The State reserves the right to initiate negotiations with the next ranked Respondent should the State cease doing business with any Respondent selected via this RFP process.

5. EVALUATION & CONTRACT AWARD

5.1. Evaluation Categories & Maximum Points

The State will consider qualifications, experience, technical approach, and cost in the evaluation of responses and award points in each of the categories detailed below (up to the maximum evaluation points indicated) to each response deemed by the State to be responsive.

| EVALUATION CATEGORY | MAXIMUM POINTS POSSIBLE |
|---|-------------------------|
| General Qualifications & Experience (refer to RFP Attachment 6.2., Section B) | 20 |
| Technical Qualifications, Experience & Approach (refer to RFP Attachment 6.2., Section C) | 50 |
| Cost Proposal (refer to RFP Attachment 6.3.) | 30 |

5.2. Evaluation Process

The evaluation process is designed to award the contract resulting from this RFP not necessarily to the Respondent offering the lowest cost, but rather to the Respondent deemed by the State to be responsive and responsible who offers the best combination of attributes based upon the evaluation criteria. ("Responsive Respondent" is defined as a Respondent that has submitted a response that conforms in all material respects to the RFP. "Responsible Respondent" is defined as a Respondent that has the capacity in all respects to perform fully the contract requirements, and the integrity and reliability which will assure good faith performance.)

5.2.1. **Technical Response Evaluation.** The Solicitation Coordinator and the Proposal Evaluation Team (consisting of three (3) or more State employees) will use the RFP Attachment 6.2., Technical Response & Evaluation Guide to manage the Technical Response Evaluation and maintain evaluation records.

5.2.1.1. The State reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to request Respondent clarification of a Technical Response or to conduct clarification discussions with any or all Respondents. Any such clarification or discussion will be limited to specific sections of the response identified by the State. The subject Respondent must put any resulting clarification in writing as may be required and in accordance with any deadline imposed by the State.

5.2.1.2. The Solicitation Coordinator will review each Technical Response to determine compliance with RFP Attachment 6.2., Technical Response & Evaluation Guide, Section A— Mandatory Requirements. If the Solicitation Coordinator determines that a response failed to meet one or more of the mandatory requirements, the Proposal Evaluation Team will review the response and document the team's determination of whether:

- the response adequately meets RFP requirements for further evaluation;
- the State will request clarifications or corrections for consideration prior to further evaluation; or,
- the State will determine the response to be non-responsive to the RFP and reject it.

- 5.2.1.3. Proposal Evaluation Team members will independently evaluate each Technical Response (that is responsive to the RFP) against the evaluation criteria in this RFP, and will score each in accordance with the RFP Attachment 6.2., Technical Response & Evaluation Guide.
- 5.2.1.4. For each response evaluated, the Solicitation Coordinator will calculate the average of the Proposal Evaluation Team member scores for RFP Attachment 6.2., Technical Response & Evaluation Guide, and record each average as the response score for the respective Technical Response section.
- 5.2.1.5. Before Cost Proposals are opened, the Proposal Evaluation Team will review the Technical Response Evaluation record and any other available information pertinent to whether or not each Respondent is responsive and responsible. If the Proposal Evaluation Team identifies any Respondent that does not to meet the responsive and responsible thresholds such that the team would not recommend the Respondent for Cost Proposal Evaluation and potential contract award, the team members will fully document the determination.
- 5.2.2. **Cost Proposal Evaluation.** The Solicitation Coordinator will open for evaluation the Cost Proposal of each Respondent deemed by the State to be responsive and responsible and calculate and record each Cost Proposal score in accordance with the RFP Attachment 6.3., Cost Proposal & Scoring Guide.
- 5.2.3. **Total Response Score.** The Solicitation Coordinator will calculate the sum of the Technical Response section scores and the Cost Proposal score and record the resulting number as the total score for the subject Response (refer to RFP Attachment 6.5., Score Summary Matrix).

5.3. **Contract Award Process**

- 5.3.1 The Solicitation Coordinator will submit the Proposal Evaluation Team determinations and scores to the head of the procuring agency for consideration along with any other relevant information that might be available and pertinent to contract award.
- 5.3.2. The procuring agency head will determine the apparent best-evaluated Response. To effect a contract award to a Respondent other than the one receiving the highest evaluation process score, the head of the procuring agency must provide written justification and obtain the written approval of the Chief Procurement Officer and the Comptroller of the Treasury.
- 5.3.3. The State will issue a Notice of Intent to Award identifying the apparent best-evaluated response and make the RFP files available for public inspection at the time and date specified in the RFP Section 2, Schedule of Events.

NOTICE: The Notice of Intent to Award shall not create rights, interests, or claims of entitlement in either the apparent best-evaluated Respondent or any other Respondent.

- 5.3.4. The Respondent identified as offering the apparent best-evaluated response must sign a contract drawn by the State pursuant to this RFP. The contract shall be substantially the same as the RFP Attachment 6.6., *Pro Forma* Contract. The Respondent must sign the contract by the Contractor Signature Deadline detailed in the RFP Section 2, Schedule of Events. If the Respondent fails to provide the signed contract by this deadline, the State

may determine that the Respondent is non-responsive to this RFP and reject the response.

- 5.3.5. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the State may, at its sole discretion, entertain limited negotiation prior to contract signing and, as a result, revise the *pro forma* contract terms and conditions or performance requirements in the State's best interests, PROVIDED THAT such revision of terms and conditions or performance requirements shall NOT materially affect the basis of response evaluations or negatively impact the competitive nature of the RFP and contractor selection process.
- 5.3.6. If the State determines that a response is non-responsive and rejects it after opening Cost Proposals, the Solicitation Coordinator will re-calculate scores for each remaining responsive Cost Proposal to determine (or re-determine) the apparent best-evaluated response.

RFP 33201-09416 STATEMENT OF CERTIFICATIONS AND ASSURANCES

The Respondent must sign and complete the Statement of Certifications and Assurances below as required, and it must be included in the Technical Response (as required by RFP Attachment 6.2., Technical Response & Evaluation Guide, Section A, Item A.1.).

The Respondent does, hereby, expressly affirm, declare, confirm, certify, and assure ALL of the following:

1. The Respondent will comply with all of the provisions and requirements of the RFP.
2. The Respondent will provide all services as defined in the Scope of Services of the RFP Attachment 6.6., *Pro Forma* Contract for the total contract period.
3. The Respondent, except as otherwise provided in this RFP, accepts and agrees to all terms and conditions set out in the RFP Attachment 6.6., *Pro Forma* Contract.
4. The Respondent acknowledges and agrees that a contract resulting from the RFP shall incorporate, by reference, all proposal responses as a part of the contract.
5. The Respondent will comply with:
 - (a) the laws of the State of Tennessee;
 - (b) Title VI of the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964;
 - (c) Title IX of the federal Education Amendments Act of 1972;
 - (d) the Equal Employment Opportunity Act and the regulations issued there under by the federal government; and,
 - (e) the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the regulations issued there under by the federal government.
6. To the knowledge of the undersigned, the information detailed within the response submitted to this RFP is accurate.
7. The response submitted to this RFP was independently prepared, without collusion, under penalty of perjury.
8. No amount shall be paid directly or indirectly to an employee or official of the State of Tennessee as wages, compensation, or gifts in exchange for acting as an officer, agent, employee, subcontractor, or consultant to the Respondent in connection with this RFP or any resulting contract.
9. Both the Technical Response and the Cost Proposal submitted in response to this RFP shall remain valid for at least 120 days subsequent to the date of the Cost Proposal opening and thereafter in accordance with any contract pursuant to the RFP.

By signing this Statement of Certifications and Assurances, below, the signatory also certifies legal authority to bind the proposing entity to the provisions of this RFP and any contract awarded pursuant to it. If the signatory is not the Respondent (if an individual) or the Respondent's company *President* or *Chief Executive Officer*, this document must attach evidence showing the individual's authority to bind the Respondent.

DO NOT SIGN THIS DOCUMENT IF YOU ARE NOT LEGALLY AUTHORIZED TO BIND THE RESPONDENT

SIGNATURE:

PRINTED NAME & TITLE:

DATE:

**RESPONDENT LEGAL ENTITY
NAME:**

**RESPONDENT FEDERAL EMPLOYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER
(or SSN):**

TECHNICAL RESPONSE & EVALUATION GUIDE

SECTION A: MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS. The Respondent must address all items detailed below and provide, in sequence, the information and documentation as required (referenced with the associated item references). The Respondent must also detail the response page number for each item in the appropriate space below.

The Solicitation Coordinator will review the response to determine if the Mandatory Requirement Items are addressed as required and mark each with pass or fail. For each item that is not addressed as required, the Proposal Evaluation Team must review the response and attach a written determination. In addition to the Mandatory Requirement Items, the Solicitation Coordinator will review each response for compliance with all RFP requirements.

| | | | |
|---|------------------|--|------------------|
| RESPONDENT LEGAL ENTITY NAME: | | | |
| Response Page # (Respondent completes) | Item Ref. | Section A— Mandatory Requirement Items | Pass/Fail |
| | | The Response must be delivered to the State no later than the Response Deadline specified in the RFP Section 2, Schedule of Events. | |
| | | The Technical Response and the Cost Proposal documentation must be packaged separately as required (refer to RFP Section 3.2., <i>et. seq.</i>). | |
| | | The Technical Response must NOT contain cost or pricing information of any type. | |
| | | The Technical Response must NOT contain any restrictions of the rights of the State or other qualification of the response. | |
| | | A Respondent must NOT submit alternate responses (refer to RFP Section 3.3.). | |
| | | A Respondent must NOT submit multiple responses in different forms (as a prime and a sub-contractor) (refer to RFP Section 3.3.). | |
| | A.1. | Provide the Statement of Certifications and Assurances (RFP Attachment 6.1.) completed and signed by an individual empowered to bind the Respondent to the provisions of this RFP and any resulting contract. The document must be signed without exception or qualification. | |
| | A.2. | Provide a statement, based upon reasonable inquiry, of whether the Respondent or any individual who shall cause to deliver goods or perform services under the contract has a possible conflict of interest (e.g., employment by the State of Tennessee) and, if so, the nature of that conflict. NOTE: Any questions of conflict of interest shall be solely within the discretion of the State, and the State reserves the right to cancel any award. | |

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| RESPONDENT LEGAL ENTITY NAME: | | | |
| Response Page # (Respondent completes) | Item Ref. | Section A— Mandatory Requirement Items | Pass/Fail |
| | A.3. | Provide a current bank reference indicating that the Respondent's business relationship with the financial institution is in positive standing. Such reference must be written in the form of a standard business letter, signed, and dated within the past three (3) months. | |
| | A.4. | Provide two current positive credit references from vendors with which the Respondent has done business written in the form of standard business letters, signed, and dated within the past three (3) months. | |
| | A.5. | Provide an official document or letter from an accredited credit bureau, verified and dated within the last three (3) months and indicating a satisfactory credit rating for the Respondent (NOTE: A credit bureau report number without the full report is insufficient and will <u>not</u> be considered responsive.) | |
| <i>State Use – Solicitation Coordinator Signature, Printed Name & Date:</i> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <i>Marcie Mills, Contracts Administration Manager</i> <i>DATE</i> </div> | | | |

TECHNICAL RESPONSE & EVALUATION GUIDE

SECTION B: GENERAL QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE. The Respondent must address all items detailed below and provide, in sequence, the information and documentation as required (referenced with the associated item references). The Respondent must also detail the response page number for each item in the appropriate space below. Proposal Evaluation Team members will independently evaluate and assign one score for all responses to Section B— General Qualifications & Experience Items.

| | | |
|--|------------------|--|
| RESPONDENT LEGAL ENTITY NAME: | | |
| Response Page # (Respondent completes) | Item Ref. | Section B— General Qualifications & Experience Items |
| | B.1. | Detail the name, e-mail address, mailing address, telephone number, and facsimile number of the person the State should contact regarding the response. |
| | B.2. | Describe the Respondent's form of business (<i>i.e.</i> , individual, sole proprietor, corporation, non-profit corporation, partnership, limited liability company) and business location (physical location or domicile). |
| | B.3. | Detail the number of years the Respondent has been in business. |
| | B.4. | Briefly describe how long the Respondent has been providing the goods or services required by this RFP. |
| | B.5. | Describe the Respondent's number of employees, client base, and location of offices. |
| | B.6. | Provide a statement of whether there have been any mergers, acquisitions, or change of control of the Respondent within the last ten (10) years. If so, include an explanation providing relevant details. |
| | B.7. | Provide a statement of whether the Respondent or, to the Respondent's knowledge, any of the Respondent's employees, agents, independent contractors, or subcontractors, involved in the delivery of goods or performance of services on a contract pursuant to this RFP, have been convicted of, pled guilty to, or pled <i>nolo contendere</i> to any felony. If so, include an explanation providing relevant details. |
| | B.8. | Provide a statement of whether, in the last ten (10) years, the Respondent has filed (or had filed against it) any bankruptcy or insolvency proceeding, whether voluntary or involuntary, or undergone the appointment of a receiver, trustee, or assignee for the benefit of creditors. If so, include an explanation providing relevant details. |
| | B.9. | <p>Provide a statement of whether there is any material, pending litigation against the Respondent that the Respondent should reasonably believe could adversely affect its ability to meet contract requirements pursuant to this RFP or is likely to have a material adverse effect on the Respondent's financial condition. If such exists, list each separately, explain the relevant details, and attach the opinion of counsel addressing whether and to what extent it would impair the Respondent's performance in a contract pursuant to this RFP.</p> <p>NOTE: All persons, agencies, firms, or other entities that provide legal opinions regarding the Respondent must be properly licensed to render such opinions. The State may require the Respondent to submit proof of license for each person or entity that renders such opinions.</p> |

RFP ATTACHMENT 6.2. — SECTION B (continued)

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|--|------------------|--|
| RESPONDENT LEGAL ENTITY NAME: | | |
| Response Page # (Respondent completes) | Item Ref. | Section B— General Qualifications & Experience Items |
| | B.10. | <p>Provide a statement of whether there are any pending or in progress Securities Exchange Commission investigations involving the Respondent. If such exists, list each separately, explain the relevant details, and attach the opinion of counsel addressing whether and to what extent it will impair the Respondent's performance in a contract pursuant to this RFP.</p> <p>NOTE: All persons, agencies, firms, or other entities that provide legal opinions regarding the Respondent must be properly licensed to render such opinions. The State may require the Respondent to submit proof of license for each person or entity that renders such opinions.</p> |
| | B.11. | Provide a brief, descriptive statement detailing evidence of the Respondent's ability to deliver the goods or services sought under this RFP (e.g., prior experience, training, certifications, resources, program and quality management systems, etc.). |
| | B.12. | Provide a narrative description of the proposed project team, its members, and organizational structure along with an organizational chart identifying the key people who will be assigned to deliver the goods or services required by this RFP. |
| | B.13. | Provide a personnel roster listing the names of key people who the Respondent will assign to meet the Respondent's requirements under this RFP along with the estimated number of hours that each individual will devote to that performance. Follow the personnel roster with a resume for each of the people listed. The resumes must detail the individual's title, education, current position with the Respondent, and employment history. |
| | B.14. | <p>Provide a statement of whether the Respondent intends to use subcontractors to meet the Respondent's requirements of any contract awarded pursuant to this RFP, and if so, detail:</p> <p>(a) the names of the subcontractors along with the contact person, mailing address, telephone number, and e-mail address for each;</p> <p>(b) a description of the scope and portions of the goods each subcontractor involved in the delivery of goods or performance of the services each subcontractor will perform; <u>and</u></p> <p>(c) a statement specifying that each proposed subcontractor has expressly assented to being proposed as a subcontractor in the Respondent's response to this RFP.</p> |
| | B.15. | <p>Provide documentation of the Respondent's commitment to diversity as represented by the following:</p> <p>(a) <u>Business Strategy</u>. Provide a description of the Respondent's existing programs and procedures designed to encourage and foster commerce with business enterprises owned by minorities, women, Tennessee service-disabled veterans, and small business enterprises. Please also include a list of the Respondent's certifications as a diversity business, if applicable.</p> <p>(b) <u>Business Relationships</u>. Provide a listing of the Respondent's current contracts with business enterprises owned by minorities, women, Tennessee service-disabled veterans and small business enterprises. Please include the following information:</p> <p>(i) contract description;</p> <p>(ii) contractor name and ownership characteristics (i.e., ethnicity, gender, Tennessee service-disabled);</p> <p>(iii) contractor contact name and telephone number.</p> <p>(c) <u>Estimated Participation</u>. Provide an estimated level of participation by business</p> |

RFP ATTACHMENT 6.2. — SECTION B (continued)

| | | |
|--|------------------|--|
| RESPONDENT LEGAL ENTITY NAME: | | |
| Response Page # (Respondent completes) | Item Ref. | Section B— General Qualifications & Experience Items |
| | | <p>enterprises owned by minorities, women, Tennessee service-disabled veterans, and small business enterprises if a contract is awarded to the Respondent pursuant to this RFP. Please include the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) a percentage (%) indicating the participation estimate. (Express the estimated participation number as a percentage of the total estimated contract value that will be dedicated to business with subcontractors and supply contractors having such ownership characteristics only and DO NOT INCLUDE DOLLAR AMOUNTS); (ii) anticipated goods or services contract descriptions; (iii) names and ownership characteristics (i.e., ethnicity, gender, Tennessee service-disabled veterans) of anticipated subcontractors and supply contractors. <p>NOTE: In order to claim status as a Diversity Business Enterprise under this contract, businesses must be certified by the Governor's Office of Diversity Business Enterprise (Go-DBE). Please visit the Go-DBE website at https://tn.diversitysoftware.com/FrontEnd/StartCertification.asp?TN=tn&XID=9810 for more information.</p> <p>(d) <u>Workforce</u>. Provide the percentage of the Respondent's total current employees by ethnicity and gender.</p> <p>NOTE: Respondents that demonstrate a commitment to diversity will advance State efforts to expand opportunity to do business with the State as contractors and subcontractors. Response evaluations will recognize the positive qualifications and experience of a Respondent that does business with enterprises owned by minorities, women, Tennessee service-disabled veterans and small business enterprises and who offer a diverse workforce.</p> |
| | B.16. | <p>Provide a statement of whether or not the Respondent has any current contracts with the State of Tennessee or has completed any contracts with the State of Tennessee within the previous five (5) year period. If so, provide the following information for all of the current and completed contracts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the name, title, telephone number and e-mail address of the State contact knowledgeable about the contract; (b) the procuring State agency name; (c) a brief description of the contract's scope of services; (d) the contract period; and (e) the contract number. <p>NOTES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Current or prior contracts with the State are <u>not</u> a prerequisite and are <u>not</u> required for the maximum evaluation score, and the existence of such contracts with the State will <u>not</u> automatically result in the addition or deduction of evaluation points. 2. Each evaluator will generally consider the results of inquiries by the State regarding all contracts noted. |
| | B.17. | <p>Provide customer references from individuals who are <u>not</u> current or former State employees for projects similar to the goods or services sought under this RFP and which represent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ two (2) accounts Respondent currently services that are similar in size to the State; <u>and</u> ▪ three (3) completed projects. |

RFP ATTACHMENT 6.2. — SECTION B (continued)

| | | |
|--|------------------|--|
| RESPONDENT LEGAL ENTITY NAME: | | |
| Response Page # (Respondent completes) | Item Ref. | Section B— General Qualifications & Experience Items |
| | | <p>References from at least three (3) different individuals are required to satisfy the requirements above, e.g., an individual may provide a reference about a completed project and another reference about a currently serviced account. The standard reference questionnaire, which <u>must</u> be used and completed, is provided at RFP Attachment 6.4. References that are not completed as required may be deemed non-responsive and may not be considered.</p> <p>The Respondent will be <u>solely</u> responsible for obtaining fully completed reference questionnaires and including them in the sealed Technical Response. In order to obtain and submit the completed reference questionnaires follow the process below.</p> <p>(a) Add the Respondent's name to the standard reference questionnaire at RFP Attachment 6.4. and make a copy for each reference.</p> <p>(b) Send a reference questionnaire and new, standard #10 envelope to each reference.</p> <p>(c) Instruct the reference to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) complete the reference questionnaire; (ii) sign and date the completed reference questionnaire; (iii) seal the completed, signed, and dated reference questionnaire within the envelope provided; (iv) sign his or her name in ink across the sealed portion of the envelope; and (v) return the sealed envelope directly to the Respondent (the Respondent may wish to give each reference a deadline, such that the Respondent will be able to collect all required references in time to include them within the sealed Technical Response). <p>(d) <u>Do NOT</u> open the sealed references upon receipt.</p> <p>(e) Enclose all <u>sealed</u> reference envelopes within a larger, labeled envelope for inclusion in the Technical Response as required.</p> <p>NOTES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The State will not accept late references or references submitted by any means other than that which is described above, and each reference questionnaire submitted must be completed as required. 2. The State will not review more than the number of required references indicated above. 3. While the State will base its reference check on the contents of the sealed reference envelopes included in the Technical Response package, the State reserves the right to confirm and clarify information detailed in the completed reference questionnaires, and may consider clarification responses in the evaluation of references. 4. The State is under <u>no</u> obligation to clarify any reference information. |
| | B.18. | <p>Provide a statement and any relevant details addressing whether the Respondent is any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. is presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, or voluntarily excluded from covered transactions by any federal or state department or agency; 2. has within the past three (3) years, been convicted of, or had a civil judgment rendered against the contracting party from commission of fraud, or a criminal offence in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a public (federal, state, or local) transaction or grant under a public transaction; violation of federal or state antitrust statutes or commission of embezzlement, theft, forgery, |

RFP ATTACHMENT 6.2. — SECTION B (continued)

| | | |
|---|------------------|--|
| RESPONDENT LEGAL ENTITY NAME: | | |
| Response Page # (Respondent completes) | Item Ref. | Section B— General Qualifications & Experience Items |
| | | bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, or receiving stolen property; 3. is presently indicted or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a government entity (federal, state, or local) with commission of any of the offenses detailed above; and 4. has within a three (3) year period preceding the contract had one or more public transactions (federal, state, or local) terminated for cause or default. |
| SCORE (for <u>all</u> Section B—Qualifications & Experience Items above): (maximum possible score = 20) | | |
| <i>State Use – Evaluator Identification:</i> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div>PRINTED NAME and SIGNATURE</div> <div>DATE</div> </div> | | |

TECHNICAL RESPONSE & EVALUATION GUIDE

SECTION C: TECHNICAL QUALIFICATIONS, EXPERIENCE & APPROACH. The Respondent must address all items (below) and provide, in sequence, the information and documentation as required (referenced with the associated item references). The Respondent must also detail the response page number for each item in the appropriate space below.

A Proposal Evaluation Team, made up of three or more State employees, will independently evaluate and score the response to each item. Each evaluator will use the following whole number, raw point scale for scoring each item:

0 = little value 1 = poor 2 = fair 3 = satisfactory 4 = good 5 = excellent

The Solicitation Coordinator will multiply the Item Score by the associated Evaluation Factor (indicating the relative emphasis of the item in the overall evaluation). The resulting product will be the item's Raw Weighted Score for purposes of calculating the section score as indicated.

| RESPONDENT LEGAL ENTITY NAME: | | | | | |
|---|-----------|---|------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Response Page # (Respondent completes) | Item Ref. | Section C— Technical Qualifications, Experience & Approach Items | Item Score | Evaluation Factor | Raw Weighted Score |
| | C.1. | Provide a detailed overview of the proposed text messaging platform and associated features. | | 24 | |
| | C.2. | Provide a narrative that describes how the Respondent will manage the project to fulfil the requirements of the contract. Provide examples of how the project will be managed at various phases (e.g. text message campaign creation, data upload and student profile setup, and project implementation). | | 5 | |
| | C.3. | Provide a narrative that describes the proposed text messaging platform functionality as outlined in section A.4. of the <i>Pro Forma</i> contract scope of services. The narrative should demonstrate an understanding of the text message configuration requirements and the storage and incorporation of student-level data. Describe whether any changes to the Respondent's existing platform infrastructure will need to occur and how modifications will take place prior to the contract start date. | | 18 | |
| | C.4. | Provide a narrative that describes the proposed user-interface and online dashboard requirements as outlined in section A.5. of the <i>Pro Forma</i> contract scope of services. Describe how users will manage their message inbox and outbound messages. Provide visual representation, such as photos or screenshots, to illustrate the proposed interface. Describe whether any changes to the Respondent's existing technology will need to occur and how modifications will take place prior to the contract start date. | | 18 | |

RFP ATTACHMENT 6.2. — SECTION C (continued)

| RESPONDENT LEGAL ENTITY NAME: | | | | | |
|--|------------------|---|--|--------------------------|---|
| Response Page # (Respondent completes) | Item Ref. | Section C— Technical Qualifications, Experience & Approach Items | Item Score | Evaluation Factor | Raw Weighted Score |
| | C.5. | Provide a narrative that describes the platform reporting functionality and how the Respondent will meet the requirements outlined in section A. 6. of the <i>Pro Forma</i> contract. Provide visual representation, such as photos or screenshots, to illustrate the online reporting system. | | 10 | |
| | C.6. | Provide a narrative that illustrates the specific methods the Respondent will employ to ensure that user and student data is secure and confidential. Detail the process by which the Respondent will secure and separate Tennessee data from other clients and how THEC will upload to and withdraw data from the system. Outline how data is backed up, archived, and destroyed, when applicable. Describe the proposed platform's compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). | | 10 | |
| | C.7. | Provide a narrative that illustrates the Respondent's ability to meet the training and technical assistance requirements outlined in section A.8. and A.9. of the <i>Pro Forma</i> contract. Describe how users will be trained on the system at the annual training in Tennessee. Describe how users will obtain technical support, the nature of the support system and staff, and the hours of availability. | | 5 | |
| | C.8. | Provide a narrative that demonstrates the past success of the platform. Include whether results have been supported through external evaluation efforts or research studies. Describe how the platform has been used in education settings, with college access programs, or with GEAR UP grants, if applicable. | | 10 | |
| <i>The Solicitation Coordinator will use this sum and the formula below to calculate the section score. All calculations will use and result in numbers rounded to two (2) places to the right of the decimal point.</i> | | | | | Total Raw Weighted Score: <i>(sum of Raw Weighted Scores above)</i> |
| Total Raw Weighted Score <hr/> Maximum Possible Raw Weighted Score <i>(i.e., 5 x the sum of item weights above)</i> | | | X 50 <i>(maximum possible score)</i> | = SCORE: | |
| <i>State Use – Evaluator Identification:</i> | | | | | |
| PRINTED NAME and SIGNATURE | | | DATE | | |

RFP ATTACHMENT 6.2. — SECTION C (continued)

| | | | | | |
|---|----------------------|---|-----------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| RESPONDENT LEGAL ENTITY NAME: | | | | | |
| Response Page # (Respondent completes) | Item Ref. | Section C— Technical Qualifications, Experience & Approach Items | Item Score | Evaluation Factor | Raw Weighted Score |
| <i>State Use – Solicitation Coordinator Signature, Printed Name & Date:</i> | | | | | |
| MARCIE MILLS, CONTRACTS ADMINISTRATION MANAGER | | | | | |
| DATE | | | | | |

RFP ATTACHMENT 6.3.**COST PROPOSAL & SCORING GUIDE****NOTICE: THIS COST PROPOSAL MUST BE COMPLETED EXACTLY AS REQUIRED**

COST PROPOSAL SCHEDULE— The Cost Proposal, detailed below, shall indicate the proposed price for goods or services defined in the Scope of Services of the RFP Attachment 6.6., *Pro Forma* Contract and for the entire contract period. The Cost Proposal shall remain valid for at least one hundred twenty (120) days subsequent to the date of the Cost Proposal opening and thereafter in accordance with any contract resulting from this RFP. All monetary amounts shall be in U.S. currency and limited to two (2) places to the right of the decimal point.

THEC has not previously contracted for text messaging services; and therefore, does not have the historical information necessary to provide an estimated maximum liability pursuant to T.C.A. § 12-3-305, requiring state agencies to include information regarding the total estimated purchase for the current contract period, and for the contract period of the contract awarded pursuant to this RFP. However, THEC is allocating up to \$190,000 per year for this initiative.

NOTICE: The Evaluation Factor associated with each cost item is for evaluation purposes only. The evaluation factors do NOT and should NOT be construed as any type of volume guarantee or minimum purchase quantity. The evaluation factors shall NOT create rights, interests, or claims of entitlement in the Respondent.

Notwithstanding the cost items herein, pursuant to the second paragraph of the *Pro Forma* Contract section C.1. (refer to RFP Attachment 6.6.), "The State is under no obligation to request work from the Contractor in any specific dollar amounts or to request any work at all from the Contractor during any period of this Contract."

This Cost Proposal must be signed, in the space below, by an individual empowered to bind the Respondent to the provisions of this RFP and any contract awarded pursuant to it. If said individual is not the *President or Chief Executive Officer*, this document must attach evidence showing the individual's authority to legally bind the Respondent.

| | | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------|---|--|
| RESPONDENT SIGNATURE: | | | |
| PRINTED NAME & TITLE: | | | |
| DATE: | | | |
| RESPONDENT LEGAL ENTITY NAME: | | | |
| Cost Item Description | Proposed Cost | State Use Only | |
| | | Evaluation Factor (Text Message Recipients per Year) | Evaluation Cost (cost x factor) |

RFP ATTACHMENT 6.3. (continued)

| RESPONDENT LEGAL ENTITY NAME: | | | |
|---|--------------------|---|---|
| Cost Item Description | Proposed Cost | State Use Only | |
| | | Evaluation Factor (Text Message Recipients per Year) | Evaluation Cost (cost x factor) |
| Cost per Text Message Recipient ¹ Year 1 | \$ / Per Recipient | 34,000 | |
| Cost per Text Message Recipient Year 2 | \$ / Per Recipient | 27,000 | |
| Cost per Text Message Recipient Year 3 | \$ / Per Recipient | 34,000 | |
| EVALUATION COST AMOUNT (sum of evaluation costs above): The Solicitation Coordinator will use this sum and the formula below to calculate the Cost Proposal Score. Numbers rounded to two (2) places to the right of the decimal point will be standard for calculations. | | | |
| Lowest evaluation cost amount from <u>all</u> proposals _____ Evaluation cost amount being evaluated | | | x 30 (maximum section score) = SCORE: |
| State Use – Solicitation Coordinator Signature, Printed Name & Date: <div> <div>Marcie Mills, Contracts Administration Manager</div> <div>DATE</div> </div> | | | |

¹ Each new individual entered shall be established as a “recipient” and shall be assigned a unique identifier by the Contractor and identified as to whether the text message recipient is in the “GEAR UP TN” group or “Advisor Corps” group as identified by THEC upon individual entered.

RFP ATTACHMENT 6.4.

REFERENCE QUESTIONNAIRE

The standard reference questionnaire provided on the following pages of this attachment MUST be completed by all individuals offering a reference for the Respondent.

The Respondent will be solely responsible for obtaining completed reference questionnaires as required (refer to RFP Attachment 6.2., Technical Response & Evaluation Guide, Section B, Item B.17.), and for enclosing the sealed reference envelopes within the Respondent's Technical Response.

RFP 33201-09416 REFERENCE QUESTIONNAIRE

REFERENCE SUBJECT: **RESPONDENT NAME** (completed by Respondent before reference is requested)

The "reference subject" specified above, intends to submit a response to the State of Tennessee in response to the Request for Proposals (RFP) indicated. As a part of such response, the reference subject must include a number of completed and sealed reference questionnaires (using this form).

Each individual responding to this reference questionnaire is asked to follow these instructions:

- complete this questionnaire (either using the form provided or an exact duplicate of this document);
- sign and date the completed questionnaire;
- seal the completed, signed, and dated questionnaire in a new standard #10 envelope;
- sign in ink across the sealed portion of the envelope; and
- return the sealed envelope containing the completed questionnaire directly to the reference subject.

1. **What is the name of the individual, company, organization, or entity responding to this reference questionnaire?**

2. **Please provide the following information about the individual completing this reference questionnaire on behalf of the above-named individual, company, organization, or entity.**

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| NAME: | |
| TITLE: | |
| TELEPHONE: | |
| E-MAIL ADDRESS: | |

3. **What goods or services does/did the reference subject provide to your company or organization?**

4. **What is the level of your overall satisfaction with the reference subject as a vendor of the goods or services described above?**

Please respond by circling the appropriate number on the scale below.

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| least satisfied | | | | | | most satisfied |

If you circled 3 or less above, what could the reference subject have done to improve that rating?

5. If the goods or services that the reference subject provided to your company or organization are completed, were the goods or services provided in compliance with the terms of the contract, on time, and within budget? If not, please explain.

6. If the reference subject is still providing goods or services to your company or organization, are these goods or services being provided in compliance with the terms of the contract, on time, and within budget? If not, please explain.

7. How satisfied are you with the reference subject's ability to perform based on your expectations and according to the contractual arrangements?

8. In what areas of goods or service delivery does/did the reference subject excel?

9. In what areas of goods or service delivery does/did the reference subject fall short?

10. What is the level of your satisfaction with the reference subject's project management structures, processes, and personnel?

Please respond by circling the appropriate number on the scale below.

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------|----------|---|----------|---|----------|---|----------|---|----------|----------------|
| | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | | 4 | | 5 | |
| least satisfied | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | most satisfied |

What, if any, comments do you have regarding the score selected above?

11. Considering the staff assigned by the reference subject to deliver the goods or services described in response to question 3 above, how satisfied are you with the technical abilities, professionalism, and interpersonal skills of the individuals assigned?

Please respond by circling the appropriate number on the scale below.

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------|----------|--|----------|--|----------|--|----------|--|----------|----------------|
| | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | | 4 | | 5 | |
| least satisfied | | | | | | | | | | most satisfied |

What, if any, comments do you have regarding the score selected above?

12. Would you contract again with the reference subject for the same or similar goods or services?

Please respond by circling the appropriate number on the scale below.

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------|----------|--|----------|--|----------|--|----------|--|----------|----------------|
| | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | | 4 | | 5 | |
| least satisfied | | | | | | | | | | most satisfied |

What, if any, comments do you have regarding the score selected above?

REFERENCE SIGNATURE:

(by the individual completing this
request for reference information)

(must be the same as the signature across the envelope seal)

DATE:

SCORE SUMMARY MATRIX

| | | | | | | |
|---|------------------------|--|------------------------|--|------------------------|--|
| | <i>RESPONDENT NAME</i> | | <i>RESPONDENT NAME</i> | | <i>RESPONDENT NAME</i> | |
| GENERAL QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE (maximum: 20) | | | | | | |
| <i>Evaluator 1</i> | | | | | | |
| <i>Evaluator 2</i> | | | | | | |
| <i>Evaluator 3</i> | | | | | | |
| | AVERAGE: | | AVERAGE: | | AVERAGE: | |
| TECHNICAL QUALIFICATIONS, EXPERIENCE & APPROACH (maximum: 50) | | | | | | |
| <i>Evaluator 1</i> | | | | | | |
| <i>Evaluator 2</i> | | | | | | |
| <i>Evaluator 3</i> | | | | | | |
| | AVERAGE: | | AVERAGE: | | AVERAGE: | |
| COST PROPOSAL (maximum: 30) | SCORE: | | SCORE: | | SCORE: | |
| TOTAL RESPONSE EVALUATION SCORE: (maximum: 100) | | | | | | |
| <i>Solicitation Coordinator Signature, Printed Name & Date:</i> | | | | | | |
| Marcie Mills, Contracts Administration Manager | | | | | | |
| DATE | | | | | | |

RFP 33201-09416 *PRO FORMA* CONTRACT

The *Pro Forma* Contract detailed in following pages of this exhibit contains some “blanks” (signified by descriptions in capital letters) that will be completed with appropriate information in the final contract resulting from the RFP.

CONTRACT
BETWEEN THE STATE OF TENNESSEE,
TENNESSEE HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION
AND
CONTRACTOR NAME

This Contract, by and between the State of Tennessee, Tennessee Higher Education Commission, hereinafter referred to as "THEC" or "State" and **Contractor Legal Entity Name**, hereinafter referred to as the "Contractor," is for the provision of a mass text messaging platform, as further defined in the "SCOPE OF SERVICES."

The Contractor is **a/an Individual, For-Profit Corporation, Non-Profit Corporation, Special Purpose Corporation Or Association, Partnership, Joint Venture, Or Limited Liability Company.**

Contractor Place of Incorporation or Organization: **Location**

Contractor Edison Registration ID: **Number**

A. SCOPE OF SERVICES:

A.1. The Contractor shall provide all services and deliverables as required, described, and detailed by this Scope of Services and shall meet all service and delivery timelines specified in the Scope of Services section or elsewhere in this Contract.

A.2. Background and Objectives: THEC seeks a mass text messaging platform for Tennessee's federally-funded GEAR UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs) grant and the state-funded Governor's College Advisor Corps. Both programs aim to increase college enrollment and persistence. GEAR UP TN is a program designed to increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. GEAR UP TN provides college access and success focused services to a cohort of approximately 7,500 students, the class of 2018, beginning in the seventh grade and continuing through the cohort's first year of postsecondary education. GEAR UP TN will also provide financial aid and college access services to approximately 5,000 direct-service high school senior students each year. The Governor's Advisor Corps, aligned with Tennessee's Drive to 55 initiatives, aims to increase the number of Tennessee students who enter and complete postsecondary education by equipping high need schools with a full-time college advisor. Advisors will help students navigate the postsecondary enrollment process and partner with Tennessee high schools to create a statewide culture of college-going and postsecondary attainment.

The text messaging solution will allow GEAR UP TN staff to create a text message program whereby unlimited scheduled text messages are sent to approximately 34,000 students in year one, 27,000 students in year two, and 34,000 students in year three of the contract. Of those students, approximately 20,000 students will be part of the Governor's Advisor Corps each year, with the remainder participating in GEAR UP TN. The number of participating students in year two is reduced due to the structure of the GEAR UP TN program. As previously mentioned, GEAR UP TN serves the class of 2018 cohort and seniors each year. During Year 2, the class of 2018 cohort will be in their senior year of high school so no additional grade levels will be served. The following year, the Class of 2018 cohort will be freshmen in college and GEAR UP TN will again serve an additional population of high school seniors. Messages may be customized based on stored student-level data and students may text back and receive a response from system users.

A.3. Project Rationale: Text messaging as a college access intervention, supported by leading research by Dr. Ben Castleman and Dr. Lindsay Page, has garnered national attention, widespread application, and the interest of the U.S. Department of Education. Using principles of behavioral economics and psychology, well-constructed, personalized, and timely text message

interventions were found to significantly improve postsecondary enrollment among low-income students and reduce “summer melt.” Summer melt is the phenomenon whereby college-intending students do not make the transition from high school to college.

A.4 System Requirements for Text Messaging. The system provided by the Contractor shall, at minimum, include the following system infrastructure requirements:

- a. Two-way Mass Text Messages: A secure platform to send unlimited text messages to a list of approximately 34,000 students in year 1, 27,000 students in year 2, and 34,000 students in year 3. The platform shall allow for two-way conversations so that students may reply to texts and receive responses from staff authorized by THEC.
- b. Scheduled Messages: Text messages that can be programmed in advance and sent at a scheduled time.
- c. Message Content: Outbound text messages that have the capability of character text messages Short Message Service (SMS) or multimedia messages (Multimedia Messaging Service MMS) to any U.S. mobile phone number.
- d. Student Profile Setup and Data Storage: The platform will store student-level data such as demographic information and other variables to personalize text messages and send messages based on specified criteria. The system shall be structured so that messages are sent to the predetermined list of students who have the option to opt-out. Students will be separated by program (GEAR UP TN and the Advisor Corps) and will receive text messages according to each program’s unique message campaign. Administrators shall have the capability to deactivate recipients as students leave the program and have the capability to update phone numbers and other student data as applicable.
- e. Tracking. Each new individual entered shall be established as a “recipient” and shall be assigned a unique identifier by the Contractor and identified as to whether the text message recipient is in the “GEAR UP TN” group or “Advisor Corps” group as identified by THEC upon individual entered.
- f. Text Message Personalization: Messages are customized to each recipient based on student-level data. Messages can be sent to a group of specific students based on their data profile, such as FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) filing status or higher education institution of interest.
- g. Branch Logic Messages: Text messages can be personalized into branches of conditional messages. The branch of messages a student receives can be determined based upon stored student-level data or their response to an embedded question. Response types or student data determines which branch of conditional messages a student receives. The specific message branch can be split into further branches.

A.5 User Interface Requirements. The Contractor shall provide an online dashboard and text message management system including, but not limited to:

- a. Online Dashboard: A user-friendly online dashboard to manage and respond to messages. This must include a web-based user interface for managing incoming and outgoing messages.
- b. Students by Group and Program: Students can be sorted into groups based on the program in which they participate, school district, school, grade level or other criteria. Text messages can be personalized and scheduled for individual groups or programs.

- c. Caselead Management: The online platform shall allow varying levels of administrator access so that scheduled messages can be sent from THEC, but local school personnel can respond to their own students' replies. Access can be given to school personnel to view their group of students only. Any user with access to view messages can also send a text message to the students they are authorized to view.
 - d. Message Archive: All messages sent to and received by students are saved in the platform as a conversation history for the term of this contract.
 - e. User Notifications: Platform users can be notified when their message inbox reaches a specified level. Users can also be notified when a phone number is invalid.
- A.6 Reporting Functionality. The platform shall provide for the tracking and reporting of text message interventions as follows:
- a. Online Reporting Capability: The platform shall provide a user-interface or dashboard on metrics including the aggregate number of text message activity, administrator activity, response rates, and outcomes. Reports can be pulled for all participants, at the district and school-level, or by any assigned group.
 - b. Data Export: Administrators can export all dashboard or reporting metrics as well as participant data.
- A.7 System Security and Privacy: The Contractor's system shall be compliant with the following security and privacy protocols:
- a. FERPA Compliance: The system shall be compliant with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99). All uploaded data and phone numbers are transferred and stored securely. The administrator can determine the level of access assigned to each user so that they can only send and receive texts with their students. Security measures shall also include:
 - b. Unique log-on: Each user has unique login credentials that will allow access only to those student groups for which the user has authority to send and receive text messages.
 - c. Compliance with State Law: The platform shall be compliant with the State of Tennessee Department of Finance and Administration Strategic Technology Solutions *Enterprise Information Security Policies, Document Version 2.0 – December 22, 2014*, located at <http://www.tn.gov/finance/oir/security/secpolicy.html>, which defines the information security policies of the State of Tennessee along with the organization and framework/structure required to communicate, implement and support these policies. The obligations set forth in this subsection shall survive the termination of this Contract.
 - d. Data security: Encryption of data in transit through a secure FTP server.
- A.8. Training: The Contractor shall provide training for THEC, GEAR UP TN site coordinators, and college advisors on the use of the platform. At minimum the training shall include:
- a. Annual trainings in Tennessee for approximately 60 platform users. THEC shall be responsible for providing the facility, refreshments and multimedia needs, as applicable.
 - b. The Contractor shall be responsible for the agenda, pre-approved by THEC, training materials and user guides or job aids.
 - c. Web-based training options for individual training opportunities.

- A.9. Technical Assistance. The Contractor shall provide technical support for THEC, GEAR UP TN coordinators and school personnel staff.

At a minimum, the technical assistance shall include:

- a. A toll-free telephone number to be answered at the Contractor's location during established technical assistance times as approved in writing by THEC. The Contractor will also provide a mailbox for messages, including an automated message offering optional support options during peak or off times.
 - b. A technical assistance email address monitored during published technical assistance times as approved in writing by THEC.
 - c. Web-based tutorials or written manuals for common support issues.
- A.10. Warranty. The Contractor represents and warrants that the term of the warranty ("Warranty Period") shall be the greater of the Term of this Contract or any other warranty general offered by the Contractor, its suppliers, or manufacturers to customers of its goods or services. The goods or services provided under this Contract shall conform to the terms and conditions of this Contract throughout the Warranty Period. Any nonconformance of the goods or services to the terms and conditions of this Contract shall constitute a "Defect" and shall be considered "Defective." If the Contractor receives notice of a Defect during the Warranty Period, then the Contractor shall correct the Defect, at no additional charge.

The Contractor represents and warrants that THEC is authorized to possess and use all equipment, materials, software, and deliverables provided under this Contract.

The Contractor represents and warrants that all goods or services provided under this Contract shall be provided in a timely and professional manner, by qualified and skilled individuals, and in conformity with standards generally accepted in Contractor's industry.

If the Contractor fails to provide the goods or services as warranted, then the Contractor will re-provide the goods or services at no additional charge. If the Contractor is unable or unwilling to re-provide the goods or services as warranted, then THEC shall be entitled to recover the fees paid to the Contractor for the Defective goods or services. Any exercise of THEC's rights under this Section shall not prejudice THEC's rights to seek any other remedies available under this Contract or applicable law.

- A.11. Inspection and Acceptance. THEC shall have the right to inspect all goods or services provided by the Contractor under this Contract. If, upon inspection, THEC determines that the goods or services are Defective, THEC shall notify the Contractor, and the Contractor shall re-deliver the goods or provide the services at no additional cost to THEC. If after a period of thirty (30) days following delivery of goods or performance of services THEC does not provide a notice of any Defects, the goods or services shall be deemed to have been accepted by THEC.

B. TERM OF CONTRACT:

This Contract shall be effective on July 1, 2016 ("Effective Date") and ending August 31, 2019 Effective Date ("Term"). The State shall have no obligation for goods or services provided by the Contractor prior to the Effective Date.

C. PAYMENT TERMS AND CONDITIONS:

- C.1. Maximum Liability. In no event shall the maximum liability of the State under this Contract exceed **Written Dollar Amount (\$Number)** ("Maximum Liability"). This Contract does not grant the Contractor any exclusive rights. The State does not guarantee that it will buy any minimum quantity of goods or services under this Contract. Subject to the terms and conditions of this Contract, the Contractor will only be paid for goods or services provided under this Contract after a purchase order is issued to Contractor by the State or as otherwise specified by this Contract.
- C.2. Compensation Firm. The payment methodology in Section C.3. of this Contract shall constitute the entire compensation due the Contractor for all goods or services provided under this Contract regardless of the difficulty, materials or equipment required. The payment methodology includes all applicable taxes, fees, overhead, and all other direct and indirect costs incurred or to be incurred by the Contractor.
- C.3. Payment Methodology. The Contractor shall be compensated based on the payment methodology for goods or services authorized by the State in a total amount as set forth in Section C.1.

- a. The Contractor's compensation shall be contingent upon the satisfactory provision of goods or services as set forth in Section A.
- b. The Contractor shall be compensated based upon the following payment methodology:

| Goods or Services Description | Amount (per compensable increment) |
|---|--|
| Cost per Text Message Recipient Year 1 | \$ / Per Recipient |
| Cost per Text Message Recipient Year 2 | \$ / Per Recipient |
| Cost per Text Message Recipient Year 3 | \$ / Per Recipient |

- c. Each new individual entered shall be established as a "recipient" and shall be assigned a unique identifier by the Contractor and identified as to whether the text message recipient is in the "GEAR UP TN" group or "Advisor Corps" group as identified by THEC upon individual entered.
- C.4. Travel Compensation. The Contractor shall not be compensated or reimbursed for travel time, travel expenses, meals, or lodging.
- C.5. Invoice Requirements. The Contractor shall invoice the State only for goods delivered and accepted by the State or services satisfactorily provided at the amounts stipulated in Section C.3., above. Contractor shall submit invoices and necessary supporting documentation each quarter of the contract term and no later than thirty (30) days after the end of the quarter to the following address:

Tennessee Higher Education Commission
Suite 1900 – Parkway Towers
404 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, TN 37243

- a. Each invoice, on Contractor's letterhead, shall clearly and accurately detail all of the following information (calculations must be extended and totaled correctly):
 - (1) Invoice number (assigned by the Contractor);
 - (2) Invoice date;
 - (3) Contract number (assigned by the State);
 - (4) Customer account name: THEC GEAR UP TN Text Messaging Platform;
 - (5) Customer account number (assigned by the Contractor to the above-referenced Customer);
 - (6) Contractor name;
 - (7) Contractor Tennessee Edison registration ID number;
 - (8) Contractor contact for invoice questions (name, phone, or email);
 - (9) Contractor remittance address;
 - (10) Description of delivered goods or services provided and invoiced, including identifying information as applicable;
 - (11) Number of delivered or completed units, increments, hours, or days as applicable, of each good or service invoiced;
 - (12) Applicable payment methodology (as stipulated in Section C.3.) of each good or service invoiced;
 - (13) Amount due for each compensable unit of good or service; and
 - (14) Total amount due for the invoice period.
 - b. The Contractor shall track whether the text message recipient is in the GEAR UP TN group or Advisor Corps group and the invoice shall reflect the total for each group.
 - c. Contractor's invoices shall:
 - (1) Only include charges for goods delivered or services provided as described in Section A and in accordance with payment terms and conditions set forth in Section C;
 - (2) Only be submitted for goods delivered or services completed and shall not include any charge for future goods to be delivered or services to be performed;
 - (3) Not include Contractor's taxes, which includes without limitation Contractor's sales and use tax, excise taxes, franchise taxes, real or personal property taxes, or income taxes; and
 - (4) Include shipping or delivery charges only as authorized in this Contract.
 - d. The timeframe for payment (or any discounts) begins only when the State is in receipt of an invoice that meets the minimum requirements of this Section C.5.
- C.6. Payment of Invoice. A payment by the State shall not prejudice the State's right to object to or question any payment, invoice, or other matter. A payment by the State shall not be construed as acceptance of goods delivered, any part of the services provided, or as approval of any amount invoiced.
- C.7. Invoice Reductions. The Contractor's invoice shall be subject to reduction for amounts included in any invoice or payment that is determined by the State, on the basis of audits conducted in accordance with the terms of this Contract, to not constitute proper compensation for goods delivered or services provided.
- C.8. Deductions. The State reserves the right to deduct from amounts, which are or shall become due and payable to the Contractor under this or any contract between the Contractor and the State of Tennessee, any amounts that are or shall become due and payable to the State of Tennessee by the Contractor.

C.9. Prerequisite Documentation. The Contractor shall not invoice the State under this Contract until the State has received the following, properly completed documentation.

- a. The Contractor shall complete, sign, and present to the State the "Authorization Agreement for Automatic Deposit Form" provided by the State. By doing so, the Contractor acknowledges and agrees that, once this form is received by the State, payments to the Contractor, under this or any other contract the Contractor has with the State of Tennessee, may be made by ACH; and
- b. The Contractor shall complete, sign, and return to the State the State-provided W-9 form. The taxpayer identification number on the W-9 form must be the same as the Contractor's Federal Employer Identification Number or Social Security Number referenced in the Contractor's Edison registration information.

D. MANDATORY TERMS AND CONDITIONS:

D.1. Required Approvals. The State is not bound by this Contract until it is duly approved by the Parties and all appropriate State officials in accordance with applicable Tennessee laws and regulations. Depending upon the specifics of this Contract, this may include approvals by the Commissioner of Finance and Administration, the Commissioner of Human Resources, the Comptroller of the Treasury, and the Chief Procurement Officer. Approvals shall be evidenced by a signature or electronic approval.

D.2. Communications and Contacts. All instructions, notices, consents, demands, or other communications required or contemplated by this Contract shall be in writing and shall be made by certified, first class mail, return receipt requested and postage prepaid, by overnight courier service with an asset tracking system, or by email or facsimile transmission with recipient confirmation. All communications, regardless of method of transmission, shall be addressed to the respective Party at the appropriate mailing address, facsimile number, or email address as stated below or any other address provided in writing by a Party.

THEC:

Leigh Ann Bodie, Associate Director for College Access Initiatives
Associate Director for College Access Initiatives
Tennessee Higher Education Commission
Suite 1900 – Parkway Towers
404 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, TN 37243
LeighAnn.Bodie@tn.gov
Telephone: 615.532.0406

THEC Fiscal:

Jason Cavender, Chief Financial Officer
Tennessee Higher Education Commission
Suite 1900 – Parkway Towers
404 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, TN 37243
Jason.Cavender@tn.gov
Telephone: 615.532.8303

The Contractor:

Contractor Contact Name & Title

Contractor Name
Address
Email Address
Telephone: Number
FAX: Number

All instructions, notices, consents, demands, or other communications shall be considered effective upon receipt or recipient confirmation as may be required.

- D.3. Modification and Amendment. This Contract may be modified only by a written amendment signed by all Parties and approved by all applicable State officials.
- D.4. Subject to Funds Availability. The Contract is subject to the appropriation and availability of State or federal funds. In the event that the funds are not appropriated or are otherwise unavailable, the State reserves the right to terminate this Contract upon written notice to the Contractor. The State's exercise of its right to terminate this Contract shall not constitute a breach of Contract by the State. Upon receipt of the written notice, the Contractor shall cease all work associated with the Contract. If the State terminates this Contract due to lack of funds availability, the Contractor shall be entitled to compensation for all conforming goods requested and accepted by the State and for all satisfactory and authorized services completed as of the termination date. Should the State exercise its right to terminate this Contract due to unavailability of funds, the Contractor shall have no right to recover from the State any actual, general, special, incidental, consequential, or any other damages of any description or amount.
- D.5. Termination for Convenience. The State may terminate this Contract for convenience without cause and for any reason. The State shall give the Contractor at least thirty (30) days written notice before the termination date. The Contractor shall be entitled to compensation for all conforming goods delivered and accepted by the State or for satisfactory, authorized services completed as of the termination date. In no event shall the State be liable to the Contractor for compensation for any goods neither requested nor accepted by the State or for any services neither requested by the State nor satisfactorily performed by the Contractor. In no event shall the State's exercise of its right to terminate this Contract for convenience relieve the Contractor of any liability to the State for any damages or claims arising under this Contract.
- D.6. Termination for Cause. If the Contractor fails to properly perform its obligations under this Contract in a timely or proper manner, or if the Contractor materially violates any terms of this Contract ("Breach Condition"), the State shall have the right to immediately terminate the Contract and withhold payments in excess of compensation for completed services or provided goods. Notwithstanding the above, the Contractor shall not be relieved of liability to the State for damages sustained by virtue of any Breach Condition and the State may seek other remedies allowed at law or in equity for breach of this Contract.
- D.7. Assignment and Subcontracting. The Contractor shall not assign this Contract or enter into a subcontract for any of the goods or services provided under this Contract without the prior written approval of the State. Notwithstanding any use of the approved subcontractors, the Contractor shall be the prime contractor and responsible for compliance with all terms and conditions of this Contract. The State reserves the right to request additional information or impose additional terms and conditions before approving an assignment of this Contract in whole or in part or the use of subcontractors in fulfilling the Contractor's obligations under this Contract.
- D.8. Conflicts of Interest. The Contractor warrants that no part of the Contractor's compensation shall be paid directly or indirectly to an employee or official of the State of Tennessee as wages, compensation, or gifts in exchange for acting as an officer, agent, employee, subcontractor, or consultant to the Contractor in connection with any work contemplated or performed under this Contract.

The Contractor acknowledges, understands, and agrees that this Contract shall be null and void if the Contractor is, or within the past six (6) months has been, an employee of the State of Tennessee or if the Contractor is an entity in which a controlling interest is held by an individual who is, or within the past six (6) months has been, an employee of the State of Tennessee.

- D.9. Nondiscrimination. The Contractor hereby agrees, warrants, and assures that no person shall be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination in the performance of this Contract or in the employment practices of the Contractor on the grounds of handicap or disability, age, race, creed, color, religion, sex, national origin, or any other classification protected by federal or state law. The Contractor shall, upon request, show proof of nondiscrimination and shall post in conspicuous places, available to all employees and applicants, notices of nondiscrimination.
- D.10. Prohibition of Illegal Immigrants. The requirements of Tenn. Code Ann. § 12-3-309 addressing the use of illegal immigrants in the performance of any contract to supply goods or services to the state of Tennessee, shall be a material provision of this Contract, a breach of which shall be grounds for monetary and other penalties, up to and including termination of this Contract.
- a. The Contractor agrees that the Contractor shall not knowingly utilize the services of an illegal immigrant in the performance of this Contract and shall not knowingly utilize the services of any subcontractor who will utilize the services of an illegal immigrant in the performance of this Contract. The Contractor shall reaffirm this attestation, in writing, by submitting to the State a completed and signed copy of the document at Attachment A, semi-annually during the Term. If the Contractor is a party to more than one contract with the State, the Contractor may submit one attestation that applies to all contracts with the State. All Contractor attestations shall be maintained by the Contractor and made available to State officials upon request.
 - b. Prior to the use of any subcontractor in the performance of this Contract, and semi-annually thereafter, during the Term, the Contractor shall obtain and retain a current, written attestation that the subcontractor shall not knowingly utilize the services of an illegal immigrant to perform work under this Contract and shall not knowingly utilize the services of any subcontractor who will utilize the services of an illegal immigrant to perform work under this Contract. Attestations obtained from subcontractors shall be maintained by the Contractor and made available to State officials upon request.
 - c. The Contractor shall maintain records for all personnel used in the performance of this Contract. Contractor's records shall be subject to review and random inspection at any reasonable time upon reasonable notice by the State.
 - d. The Contractor understands and agrees that failure to comply with this section will be subject to the sanctions of Tenn. Code Ann. § 12-3-309 for acts or omissions occurring after its effective date.
 - e. For purposes of this Contract, "illegal immigrant" shall be defined as any person who is not: (i) a United States citizen; (ii) a Lawful Permanent Resident; (iii) a person whose physical presence in the United States is authorized; (iv) allowed by the federal Department of Homeland Security and who, under federal immigration laws or regulations, is authorized to be employed in the U.S.; or (v) is otherwise authorized to provide services under the Contract.
- D.11. Records. The Contractor shall maintain documentation for all charges under this Contract. The books, records, and documents of the Contractor, for work performed or money received under this Contract, shall be maintained for a period of five (5) full years from the date of the final payment and shall be subject to audit at any reasonable time and upon reasonable notice by the

State, the Comptroller of the Treasury, or their duly appointed representatives. The financial statements shall be prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.

- D.12. Monitoring. The Contractor's activities conducted and records maintained pursuant to this Contract shall be subject to monitoring and evaluation by the State, the Comptroller of the Treasury, or their duly appointed representatives.
- D.13. Progress Reports. The Contractor shall submit brief, periodic, progress reports to the State as requested.
- D.14. Strict Performance. Failure by any Party to this Contract to require, in any one or more cases, the strict performance of any of the terms, covenants, conditions, or provisions of this Contract shall not be construed as a waiver or relinquishment of any term, covenant, condition, or provision. No term or condition of this Contract shall be held to be waived, modified, or deleted except by a written amendment signed by the Parties.
- D.15. Independent Contractor. The Parties shall not act as employees, partners, joint venturers, or associates of one another. The Parties are independent contracting entities. Nothing in this Contract shall be construed to create an employer/employee relationship or to allow either Party to exercise control or direction over the manner or method by which the other transacts its business affairs or provides its usual services. The employees or agents of one Party are not employees or agents of the other Party.
- D.16. Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. The Contractor agrees that it will be responsible for compliance with the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act ("PPACA") with respect to itself and its employees, including any obligation to report health insurance coverage, provide health insurance coverage, or pay any financial assessment, tax, or penalty for not providing health insurance. The Contractor shall indemnify the State and hold it harmless for any costs to the State arising from Contractor's failure to fulfill its PPACA responsibilities for itself or its employees.
- D.17. Limitation of State's Liability. The State shall have no liability except as specifically provided in this Contract. In no event will the State be liable to the Contractor or any other party for any lost revenues, lost profits, loss of business, decrease in the value of any securities or cash position, time, money, goodwill, or any indirect, special, incidental, punitive, exemplary or consequential damages of any nature, whether based on warranty, contract, statute, regulation, tort (including but not limited to negligence), or any other legal theory that may arise under this Contract or otherwise. The State's total liability under this Contract (including any exhibits, schedules, amendments or other attachments to the Contract) or otherwise shall under no circumstances exceed the Maximum Liability. This limitation of liability is cumulative and not per incident.
- D.18. Limitation of Contractor's Liability. In accordance with Tenn. Code Ann. § 12-3-701, the Contractor's liability for all claims arising under this Contract shall be limited to an amount equal to two (2) times the Maximum Liability amount detailed in Section C.1. and as may be amended, PROVIDED THAT in no event shall this Section limit the liability of the Contractor for: (i) intellectual property or any Contractor indemnity obligations for infringement for third-party intellectual property rights; (ii) any claims covered by any specific provision in the Contract providing for liquidated damages; or (iii) any claims for intentional torts, criminal acts, fraudulent conduct, or acts or omissions that result in personal injuries or death.
- D.19. Hold Harmless. The Contractor agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the State of Tennessee as well as its officers, agents, and employees from and against any and all claims, liabilities, losses, and causes of action which may arise, accrue, or result to any person, firm, corporation, or other entity which may be injured or damaged as a result of acts, omissions, or negligence on the part of the Contractor, its employees, or any person acting for or on its or their behalf relating

to this Contract. The Contractor further agrees it shall be liable for the reasonable cost of attorneys for the State to enforce the terms of this Contract.

In the event of any suit or claim, the Parties shall give each other immediate notice and provide all necessary assistance to respond. The failure of the State to give notice shall only relieve the Contractor of its obligations under this Section to the extent that the Contractor can demonstrate actual prejudice arising from the failure to give notice. This Section shall not grant the Contractor, through its attorneys, the right to represent the State in any legal matter, as the right to represent the State is governed by Tenn. Code Ann. § 8-6-106.

- D.20. HIPAA Compliance. The State and Contractor shall comply with obligations under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 ("HIPAA"), Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health ("HITECH") Act and any other relevant laws and regulations regarding privacy (collectively the "Privacy Rules"). The obligations set forth in this Section shall survive the termination of this Contract.
- a. Contractor warrants to the State that it is familiar with the requirements of the Privacy Rules, and will comply with all applicable requirements in the course of this Contract.
 - b. Contractor warrants that it will cooperate with the State, including cooperation and coordination with State privacy officials and other compliance officers required by the Privacy Rules, in the course of performance of the Contract so that both parties will be in compliance with the Privacy Rules.
 - c. The State and the Contractor will sign documents, including but not limited to business associate agreements, as required by the Privacy Rules and that are reasonably necessary to keep the State and Contractor in compliance with the Privacy Rules. This provision shall not apply if information received or delivered by the parties under this Contract is NOT "protected health information" as defined by the Privacy Rules, or if the Privacy Rules permit the parties to receive or deliver the information without entering into a business associate agreement or signing another document.
 - d. The Contractor will indemnify the State and hold it harmless for any violation by the Contractor or its subcontractors of the Privacy Rules. This includes the costs of responding to a breach of protected health information, the costs of responding to a government enforcement action related to the breach, and any fines, penalties, or damages paid by the State because of the violation.
- D.21. Tennessee Consolidated Retirement System. Subject to statutory exceptions contained in Tenn. Code Ann. §§ 8-36-801, *et seq.*, the law governing the Tennessee Consolidated Retirement System ("TCRS"), provides that if a retired member of TCRS, or of any superseded system administered by TCRS, or of any local retirement fund established under Tenn. Code Ann. §§ 8-35-101, *et seq.*, accepts State employment, the member's retirement allowance is suspended during the period of the employment. Accordingly and notwithstanding any provision of this Contract to the contrary, the Contractor agrees that if it is later determined that the true nature of the working relationship between the Contractor and the State under this Contract is that of "employee/employer" and not that of an independent contractor, the Contractor, if a retired member of TCRS, may be required to repay to TCRS the amount of retirement benefits the Contractor received from TCRS during the Term.
- D.22. Tennessee Department of Revenue Registration. The Contractor shall comply with all applicable registration requirements contained in Tenn. Code Ann. §§ 67-6-601 – 608. Compliance with applicable registration requirements is a material requirement of this Contract.

D.23. Debarment and Suspension. The Contractor certifies, to the best of its knowledge and belief, that it, its current and future principals, its current and future subcontractors and their principals:

- a. are not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from covered transactions by any federal or state department or agency;
- b. have not within a three (3) year period preceding this Contract been convicted of, or had a civil judgment rendered against them from commission of fraud, or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a public (federal, state, or local) transaction or grant under a public transaction; violation of federal or state antitrust statutes or commission of embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification, or destruction of records, making false statements, or receiving stolen property;
- c. are not presently indicted or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a government entity (federal, state, or local) with commission of any of the offenses detailed in section b. of this certification; and
- d. have not within a three (3) year period preceding this Contract had one or more public transactions (federal, state, or local) terminated for cause or default.

The Contractor shall provide immediate written notice to the State if at any time it learns that there was an earlier failure to disclose information or that due to changed circumstances, its principals or the principals of its subcontractors are excluded or disqualified.

D.24. Force Majeure. "Force Majeure Event" means fire, flood, earthquake, elements of nature or acts of God, wars, riots, civil disorders, rebellions or revolutions, acts of terrorism or any other similar cause beyond the reasonable control of the Party except to the extent that the non-performing Party is at fault in failing to prevent or causing the default or delay, and provided that the default or delay cannot reasonably be circumvented by the non-performing Party through the use of alternate sources, workaround plans or other means. A strike, lockout or labor dispute shall not excuse either Party from its obligations under this Contract. Except as set forth in this Section, any failure or delay by a Party in the performance of its obligations under this Contract arising from a Force Majeure Event is not a default under this Contract or grounds for termination. The non-performing Party will be excused from performing those obligations directly affected by the Force Majeure Event, and only for as long as the Force Majeure Event continues, provided that the Party continues to use diligent, good faith efforts to resume performance without delay. The occurrence of a Force Majeure Event affecting Contractor's representatives, suppliers, subcontractors, customers or business apart from this Contract is not a Force Majeure Event under this Contract. Contractor will promptly notify the State of any delay caused by a Force Majeure Event (to be confirmed in a written notice to the State within one (1) day of the inception of the delay) that a Force Majeure Event has occurred, and will describe in reasonable detail the nature of the Force Majeure Event. If any Force Majeure Event results in a delay in Contractor's performance longer than forty-eight (48) hours, the State may, upon notice to Contractor: (a) cease payment of the fees until Contractor resumes performance of the affected obligations; or (b) immediately terminate this Contract or any purchase order, in whole or in part, without further payment except for fees then due and payable. Contractor will not increase its charges under this Contract or charge the State any fees other than those provided for in this Contract as the result of a Force Majeure Event.

D.25. State and Federal Compliance. The Contractor shall comply with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations in the performance of this Contract.

D.26. Governing Law. This Contract shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of the State of Tennessee. The Tennessee Claims Commission or the state or federal courts in

Tennessee shall be the venue for all claims, disputes, or disagreements arising under this Contract. The Contractor acknowledges and agrees that any rights, claims, or remedies against the State of Tennessee or its employees arising under this Contract shall be subject to and limited to those rights and remedies available under Tenn. Code Ann. §§ 9-8-101 - 407.

- D.27. Entire Agreement. This Contract is complete and contains the entire understanding between the Parties relating to its subject matter, including all the terms and conditions of the Parties' agreement. This Contract supersedes any and all prior understandings, representations, negotiations, and agreements between the Parties, whether written or oral.
- D.28. Severability. If any terms and conditions of this Contract are held to be invalid or unenforceable as a matter of law, the other terms and conditions of this Contract shall not be affected and shall remain in full force and effect. The terms and conditions of this Contract are severable.
- D.29. Headings. Section headings of this Contract are for reference purposes only and shall not be construed as part of this Contract.
- D.30. Incorporation of Additional Documents. Each of the following documents is included as a part of this Contract by reference. In the event of a discrepancy or ambiguity regarding the Contractor's duties, responsibilities, and performance under this Contract, these items shall govern in order of precedence below:
- a. any amendment to this Contract, with the latter in time controlling over any earlier amendments;
 - b. this Contract with any attachments or exhibits (excluding the items listed at subsections c. through f., below), which includes; Attachment A
 - c. any clarifications of or addenda to the Contractor's proposal seeking this Contract;
 - d. the State solicitation, as may be amended, requesting responses in competition for this Contract;
 - e. any technical specifications provided to proposers during the procurement process to award this Contract; and
 - f. the Contractor's response seeking this Contract.

E. SPECIAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS:

- E.1. Conflicting Terms and Conditions. Should any of these special terms and conditions conflict with any other terms and conditions of this Contract, the special terms and conditions shall be subordinate to the Contract's other terms and conditions.
- E.2. Confidentiality of Records. Strict standards of confidentiality of records and information shall be maintained in accordance with applicable state and federal law. All material and information, regardless of form, medium or method of communication, provided to the Contractor by the State or acquired by the Contractor on behalf of the State that is regarded as confidential under state or federal law shall be regarded as "Confidential Information." Nothing in this Section shall permit Contractor to disclose any Confidential Information, regardless of whether it has been disclosed or made available to the Contractor due to intentional or negligent actions or inactions of agents of the State or third parties. Confidential Information shall not be disclosed except as required or permitted under state or federal law. Contractor shall take all necessary steps to safeguard the confidentiality of such material or information in conformance with applicable state and federal law.

The obligations set forth in this Section shall survive the termination of this Contract.

- E.3. Printing Authorization. The Contractor agrees that no publication coming within the jurisdiction of Tenn. Code Ann. §§ 12-7-101, *et seq.*, shall be printed pursuant to this Contract unless a printing authorization number has been obtained and affixed as required by Tenn. Code Ann. § 12-7-103 (d).
- E.4. Software License Warranty. Contractor grants a license to the State to use all software provided under this Contract in the course of the State's business and purposes.
- E.5. Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act and Tennessee Data Accessibility, Transparency and Accountability Act. The Contractor shall comply with the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (20 U.S.C. 1232(g)) and its accompanying regulations (34 C.F.R. § 99) ("FERPA"). The Contractor warrants that the Contractor is familiar with FERPA requirements and that it will comply with these requirements in the performance of its duties under this Contract. The Contractor agrees to cooperate with the State, as required by FERPA, in the performance of its duties under this Contract. The Contractor agrees to maintain the confidentiality of all education records and student information. The Contractor shall only use such records and information for the exclusive purpose of performing its duties under this Contract.

The Contractor shall also comply with Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-1-701, *et seq.*, known as the "Data Accessibility, Transparency and Accountability Act," and any accompanying administrative rules or regulations (collectively "DATAA"). The Contractor agrees to maintain the confidentiality of all records containing student and de-identified data, as this term is defined in DATAA, in any databases, to which the State has granted the Contractor access, and to only use such data for the exclusive purpose of performing its duties under this Contract.

Any instances of unauthorized disclosure of data containing personally identifiable information in violation of FERPA or DATAA that come to the attention of the Contractor shall be reported to the State within twenty-four (24) hours. Contractor shall indemnify and hold harmless State, its employees, agents and representatives, from and against any and all claims, liabilities, losses, or causes of action that may arise, accrue, or result to any person or entity that is injured or damaged as a result of Contractor's failure to comply with this section.

- E.6. Lobbying. The Contractor certifies, to the best of its knowledge and belief, that:
- a. No federally appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the Contractor, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of an agency, a member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any federal contract, the making of any federal grant, the making of any federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.
 - b. If any funds other than federally appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a member of Congress in connection with any contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the Contractor shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions.
 - c. The Contractor shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all sub-awards at all tiers (including subcontracts, sub-grants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly.

This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into and is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by 31 U.S.C. § 1352.

- E.7. Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA). This Contract requires the Contractor to provide supplies or services that are funded in whole or in part by federal funds that are subject to FFATA. The Contractor is responsible for ensuring that all applicable requirements, including but not limited to those set forth herein, of FFATA are met and that the Contractor provides information to the State as required.

The Contractor shall comply with the following:

a. Reporting of Total Compensation of the Contractor's Executives.

- (1) The Contractor shall report the names and total compensation of each of its five most highly compensated executives for the Contractor's preceding completed fiscal year, if in the Contractor's preceding fiscal year it received:
 - i. 80 percent or more of the Contractor's annual gross revenues from federal procurement contracts and federal financial assistance subject to the Transparency Act, as defined at 2 CFR 170.320 (and subawards); and
 - ii. \$25,000,000 or more in annual gross revenues from federal procurement contracts (and subcontracts), and federal financial assistance subject to the Transparency Act (and subawards); and
 - iii. The public does not have access to information about the compensation of the executives through periodic reports filed under section 13(a) or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (15 U.S.C. 78m(a), 78o(d)) or section 6104 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986. (To determine if the public has access to the compensation information, see the U.S. Security and Exchange Commission total compensation filings at <http://www.sec.gov/answers/execomp.htm>).

As defined in 2 C.F.R. § 170.315, "Executive" means officers, managing partners, or any other employees in management positions.

- (2) Total compensation means the cash and noncash dollar value earned by the executive during the Contractor's preceding fiscal year and includes the following (for more information see 17 C.F.R. § 229.402(c)(2)):
 - i. Salary and bonus.
 - ii. Awards of stock, stock options, and stock appreciation rights. Use the dollar amount recognized for financial statement reporting purposes with respect to the fiscal year in accordance with the Statement of Financial Accounting Standards No. 123 (Revised 2004) (FAS 123R), Shared Based Payments.
 - iii. Earnings for services under non-equity incentive plans. This does not include group life, health, hospitalization or medical reimbursement plans that do not discriminate in favor of executives, and are available generally to all salaried employees.
 - iv. Change in pension value. This is the change in present value of defined benefit and actuarial pension plans.
 - v. Above-market earnings on deferred compensation which is not tax qualified.

- vi. Other compensation, if the aggregate value of all such other compensation (e.g. severance, termination payments, value of life insurance paid on behalf of the employee, perquisites or property) for the executive exceeds \$10,000.
- b. The Contractor must report executive total compensation described above to the State by the end of the month during which this Contract is awarded.
- c. If this Contract is amended to extend the Term, the Contractor must submit an executive total compensation report to the State by the end of the month in which the term extension becomes effective.
- d. The Contractor will obtain a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number and maintain its DUNS number for the term of this Contract. More information about obtaining a DUNS Number can be found at: <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform/>

The Contractor's failure to comply with the above requirements is a material breach of this Contract for which the State may terminate this Contract for cause. The State will not be obligated to pay any outstanding invoice received from the Contractor unless and until the Contractor is in full compliance with the above requirements.

E.8 Survival. The terms, provisions, representations, and warranties contained in this Contract which by their sense and context are intended to survive the performance and termination of this Contract, shall so survive the completion of performance and termination of this Contract.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF,

CONTRACTOR LEGAL ENTITY NAME:

RFP PRO FORMA CONTRACT DO NOT SIGN

CONTRACTOR SIGNATURE

DATE

PRINTED NAME AND TITLE OF CONTRACTOR SIGNATORY (above)

TENNESSEE HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSISON:

DR. RUSS DEATON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

DATE

ATTESTATION RE PERSONNEL USED IN CONTRACT PERFORMANCE

| | |
|--|--|
| If the attestation applies to more than one contract, modify this row accordingly. SUBJECT CONTRACT NUMBER: | |
| CONTRACTOR LEGAL ENTITY NAME: | |
| EDISON VENDOR ID: | |

If the attestation applies to more than one contract, modify the following paragraph accordingly.

The Contractor, identified above, does hereby attest, certify, warrant, and assure that the Contractor shall not knowingly utilize the services of an illegal immigrant in the performance of this Contract and shall not knowingly utilize the services of any subcontractor who will utilize the services of an illegal immigrant in the performance of this Contract.

RFP RELEASE 1 – DO NOT SIGN

CONTRACTOR SIGNATURE

NOTICE: This attestation MUST be signed by an individual empowered to contractually bind the Contractor. Attach evidence documenting the individual's authority to contractually bind the Contractor, unless the signatory is the Contractor's chief executive or president.

PRINTED NAME AND TITLE OF SIGNATORY

DATE OF ATTESTATION